



## **TEAM HANDBOOK**

**(Revised 2021-2022)**

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**1.0 MISSION STATEMENT:**

Stafford Aquatics Team (STAT) is committed to providing all of our swimmers access to exceptional professional coaching, regardless of age, so that they may develop the skills and confidence (both in and out of the pool) necessary for competitive swimming. We also strive to create an inclusive environment that encourages lasting friendships, fun, and, most of all, a lifelong interest in swimming and leading a healthy, active lifestyle. Accomplishing STAT’s mission requires commitment from all individuals involved with the team. Our Coaches and Board Members are dedicated to providing all swimmers with a professional, safe, and educational environment. Swimmers are expected to show their commitment by attending practices on a regular basis, respecting and supporting their coaches, teammates, and other swimmers on deck and in the water, and by conducting themselves in a responsible manner at all times. Parents are expected to support the team and their swimmer(s) by contributing their time assisting at swimming and social events, supporting STAT’s mission and code of conduct, and nurturing their swimmer(s) in a loving and supportive manner.

## **1.1 Team Description and History**

STAT is a year-round USA swimming team. The team is divided into age- and ability-appropriate practice groups, providing a natural and sensible progression through which the swimmer moves as he/she/they grow and mature. This structure is designed to encourage a swimmer's enthusiasm for the sport and to meet the needs of all levels of ability and interest. STAT was organized in 2007 by a group of dedicated families and coaches as a USA Swimming Club and as part of the Virginia Swimming LSC. Since the team's beginning, STAT has had multiple senior National and U.S. Open qualifiers; Junior National qualifiers and finalists; Sectional qualifiers and finalists; Eastern Zone champions and several Eastern Zone finalists and qualifiers; a Virginia State champion; and Age Group Champs champions and several finalists. Several have gone on to compete at the college level, to include several scholarship recipients. (Multiple swimmers have achieved A - AAAA times.)

## **1.2 Team Name and Colors**

By design, the goal was to build a local team representing the community where we train (Stafford). The name simply followed -- Stafford Aquatics Team (STAT). The team colors are blue and green.

## **1.3 Arena Team**

We are an Arena Sponsored Team. What does that mean? Arena is the brand of swimsuits and apparel our team wears as the official team suit. Parents are not required to buy the team suit, although it is encouraged. In return for this relationship, Arena provides apparel to both our coaches and swimmers who qualify for Junior Nationals, Senior Nationals, and US Open. STAT does not provide this apparel.

## **1.4 Primary Team Location**

Since opening in May of 2016, all of STAT's swim groups practice at the Jeff Rouse Swim and Sports Center (JRSSC), located at 1600 Mine Rd. Stafford, VA 22554. The JRSSC is a brand new, state-of-the-art, 76,000-square-foot facility that houses a 50-meter competition pool with moveable bulkhead, a 25-yard recreational pool, a gym, cafe, etc.

## **1.5 Team Mailing Address**

Stafford Aquatics Team (STAT)

P.O. Box 836

Stafford, VA 22555

## **1.6 Swim Season**

Practice begins on the Tuesday after Labor Day. Short Course Meet Season runs from October through March. Long Course Meet Season begins in mid-April and lasts until the beginning of August (for those qualifying swimmers). Summer Break is mid-late July until the first week of September. Intermittent breaks during the season will be determined by the head coach.

## **1.7 How to Become a Member**

Membership is open to boys and girls, ages 5 - 18. Formal tryouts are held throughout the year. Swimmers wishing to join STAT should contact the Head Coach (Coach Delwyn [djones.stat@gmail.com](mailto:djones.stat@gmail.com)) to schedule a tryout for their swimmer. After the season starts, swimmers may join the team if space is available. Availability of openings on the team will be determined by the number of swimmers on the team and in individual groups, the number of hours of pool time available, and the age and ability of the prospective swimmer.

## **1.8 Membership Requirement -- USA Swimming Membership**

USA Swimming membership entitles a swimmer to enter all USA Swimming events for which he or she qualifies. A swimmer must have a current membership or have already applied for one in order to swim in a USA Swimming meet. Membership is included in the STAT registration fee each year. This membership includes insurance, which covers the member during supervised team practices and events and at USA Swimming meets. It is secondary to other insurance carried by the swimmer's family. If a swimmer in the HS Prep group opts to become a year-round swimmer following their high school swim season, the family will be required to pay the USA membership fee as part of year round registration, as it is not included in the HS Prep registration fee.

**1.8.1 USA Swimming Number** - Each registered swimmer is assigned a USA Swimming membership number. This is a 14-digit number/letter identifier; mm/dd/yy of birthday, the first three letters of the swimmer's first name, the swimmer's middle initial, and the first four letters of the swimmer's last name. When signing your child up for registration, please make sure the DOB is correct, as this will affect the USA Swimming number. If your DOB is incorrect, it will not match up with prior registrations, or, if it is your first time in USA swimming, it will assign you an incorrect age.

## **2.0 COACHING**

### **2.1 Coach's Responsibilities**

The Head Coach's job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. STAT's coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program that demonstrates the value of striving to improve oneself. Our coaches control all matters regarding training and competition. The coaching staff is constantly updating and improving the STAT program. It is the swimmer's and the parent's responsibility to make the most out of the excellent opportunity this program provides for success in swimming.

- A. Coaches will place swimmers in practice groups according to age and ability level.
- B. Coaches determine when a swimmer is ready to move to a more challenging practice group.

C. Coaches will maintain sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen. Each group's practices are based on sound principles and geared to the goals of that group.

D. The coaching staff determines which meets STAT swimmers may attend and in which events he/she/they should compete.

E. The coaching staff will conduct and supervise meet warm-ups for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to offer love and encouragement regardless of their swimmer's performance.

F. Team relay placements are the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.

## **2.2 Coaching Staff – Bios**

**2.2.1 Head Coach - Delwyn Jones:** In April of 2017, STAT welcomed Coach Delwyn Jones as Head Coach. Coach Delwyn was born and raised in the Fredericksburg area. He is married and has three children, ages 7, 10, and 18. Delwyn coached with the Rays for five years before relocating to Florida where he spent a few months learning from, and working with, accomplished coaches and talented swimmers in the Tampa area. After that, he became the Head Coach for the Rappahannock Raiders. In the two seasons he was with the Raiders, the team doubled in size. Coach Delwyn has developed a highly competitive senior group, with many national level swimmers. Many of his athletes move on to college swimming. He has had the privilege to train and assist one of his swimmers in qualifying for the Paralympic Trials. This swimmer went on to set two National Paralympic records and become a resident athlete at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Through the years, Coach Delwyn has lead several age group swimmers to become State Champions, Zones Champions, and National Age Group Champions and has had several swimmers achieve Top 10 Virginia Swimming, Eastern Zone, and National Rankings. He has coached multiple Senior Champ, Sectional, YMCA National, NASA Juniors, NCSA Juniors, USA Junior National, and US Open qualifiers. He has also assisted in the coaching of multiple Senior National, Olympic Trial, and World Championship Trial qualifiers.

**2.2.2 Head Age Group Coach - Michelle Pugh:** April 2017, Coach Michelle joined STAT as Head Age Group Coach. She is a wife and mother of two adult children and has lived in Stafford County since 2003. She has been a competitive swimmer since the age of 5 and continued beyond college, where she attended and had a very successful swim career for Towson State University, Division 1, and held team records for over 20 years in the 50, 100 free. In addition to a strong aquatics management background, she has taught swim lessons, adaptive swim classes, and water aerobics for more than 30 years. She is an American Red Cross Instructor and has taught an abundance of lifeguarding classes, CPR/AED, and Safety Training for Swim Coaches since 2007. Coach Michelle has been the head coach for multiple summer league teams and has taught countless swimmers how to swim. She worked with the Rays for six years as the head coach of their Age Group 1 program and as the assistant coach for the Junior Group. During that time, Michelle was very successful being the primary coach

for multiple Age Group Champion qualifiers and Zones, year after year, as well as two state champions and several swimmers who finished in the top three. She also helped coach several swimmers in the Junior group to Age Groups and Senior Champs, which also included multiple state champions and top 3 finishers in various events. She then became the Head Age Group Coach for Rappahannock Raiders for two years, continuing to produce top level swimmers to include a NASA Elite Age Group Qualifier.

### **3.0 SWIM PROGRAM**

#### **3.1 Philosophy**

STAT's mission is to give swimmers the best coaching available, increase their skills and confidence (both in and out of the pool), create lasting friendships, have fun, and, most of all, create a life-long interest in both swimming and leading a healthy, active lifestyle. Our goals are to:

- A. Provide physical development and encourage proper conditioning, self-discipline, and healthy habits for life
- B. Provide an opportunity for social, emotional, and educational development and to encourage peer and family participation
- C. Provide the opportunity to learn sportsmanship, teamwork, responsibility, and self discipline through competition.

#### **3.2 Gender Diversity and Inclusion**

A transgender athlete will be allowed to participate in accordance with their gender identity, irrespective of the sex listed on the athlete's birth certificate or other records and regardless of whether the athlete has undergone any medical procedure. Teammates, coaches, swimmers, and all others will refer to an athlete by their chosen name and pronoun.

##### **3.2.1 Apparel**

An athlete will be permitted to dress consistently with their gender identity.

##### **3.2.2 Restrooms and Locker Rooms**

An athlete will be able to use the locker room, changing facility, and/or restroom that is consistent with their gender identity. When requested and/or where available, an athlete will be provided access to a gender-neutral bathroom or changing facility. The JRSSC has multiple large family restrooms available for use in the back hallway, adjacent to the pool deck.

#### **3.3 Participation**

Participation with STAT involves attending practice, listening and following the coach's instruction, participating in team competition, and paying fees on a timely basis. As

athletes committed to the sport of swimming, all STAT swimmers are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at practice, swim meets, and social events.

### **3.4 Code of Conduct**

All categories of members shall be subject to:

- A. The TEAM Bylaws, Rules and Regulations as prescribed by the Board of Directors.
- B. Facility Rules and Regulations as prescribed by the TEAM and by the organization providing pool time or facility use to the TEAM.
- C. Any property of the TEAM, or damage to third party property that is billed to the TEAM, that is broken or damaged by a member of any category shall be replaced or paid for promptly by such member.
- D. The TEAM assumes no responsibility, and members of any category shall have no claim against the TEAM, for the property of members of any category, which may be brought into or left in any facility in which approved TEAM activities are being held.

### **3.5 Expectations of Practice**

A swimmer will:

- A. Maintain a cooperative and respectful attitude toward the coach.
- B. Maintain conversational voice levels.
- C. NOT run on pool deck, push or shove another person either in or out of the water, splash, chew gum, spit, or engage in or use obscene, derogatory, or profane behavior or language.
- D. Be ready to begin practice on time. Swimmers should be in the pool area with all necessary equipment, ready to begin practice at least 5 minutes before the scheduled time at which their practice is to begin. This will allow for proper stretching and any necessary pre-practice instruction.
- E. Respect the personal property of teammates, or restitution for damage will be expected.
- F. Attend regular practice sessions as determined by the respective swim group coach.
- G. Be responsible for his/her swim gear and keep all facilities clean.
- H. Demonstrate cooperativeness and respect towards all persons involved with STAT.
- I. Gladly pitch-in if asked to assist a coach or parent member.
- J. Refrain from playfulness deemed by the coach as possible of becoming frightening, harassing, and/or hurtful to others.

- K. Resolve differences through conversation and compromise. Disputes not successfully resolved verbally should be referred to the coach.
- L. Practice lane etiquette. Swimmers who stop in the middle of any set for any reason should rejoin his/her lane as quickly as possible with the least disruption as possible.
- M. Avoid unreasonable physical contact.
- N. Not throw any objects. Any items in the pool area can be dangerous if thrown. Nothing should be thrown at any time.
- O. Refrain from the use of addictive substances. Any swimmer who is known to use alcohol, drugs, or tobacco is subject to suspension from the team.
- P. Swim warm-up/warm-down as part of the practice. The STAT coaching staff will announce when practice begins. Swimmers not swimming within the allotted amount of time as defined by the coach will be in violation of the proper warm-up rule. Warm down should be completed as quickly as possible.
- Q. Behave in such a way that their actions reflect positively on the team at all TEAM functions, whether it be practice, meets, or social gatherings. All members of the TEAM, whether they are parents or swimmers, should continue to protect and improve the excellent reputation of the TEAM. The STAT coaching staff will deal immediately with any behavior resulting in the slapping, hitting, or punching of any swimmer, in jest or in anger. The STAT coaching staff will also deal immediately with any crude and/or threatening language or behavior.

### **3.6 Disruptive Behavior**

#### **3.6.1 During Practice**

Disruptive behavior during practices will not be tolerated and will be handled by the coaches. The intent of practice is to improve technique and endurance. If necessary, the coach reserves the right to dismiss and/or suspend the swimmer from practice. If a swimmer is dismissed from practice:

- A. They may NOT leave the pool deck area until the practice session is over and the coach personally speaks with and dismisses them. The discussion of the incident must be postponed until it is safe and convenient for the coach.
- B. They must inform the coach if they wish to call their parents for immediate pickup. The swimmer must remain on the pool deck until the parent arrives and the coach is notified that the swimmer is now under parental supervision.
- C. It is the coach's responsibility to inform the parent(s) following a reprimand that dismisses the swimmer from practice. This may be done verbally (in a private location) or in writing. The coach will maintain records of each incident; including date, incident description, and swimmer's signature. The record will be forwarded to the Board of Directors. *Under no circumstance will the coach, while coaching on deck,*

*engage in a conversation with a parent concerning an individual disciplined during a practice session or when there are still swimmers in the water or on the pool deck.*

### **3.6.2 During Meets**

- A. As swimmers who represent STAT, poor manners, poor sportsmanship, and poor behavior reflect negatively on all STAT members and could jeopardize our invitation at future meets and, as such, will be appropriately dealt with.
- B. It is against USA Swimming Inc. rules for parents to be on deck during a meet. Only swimmers, coaches, and parents registered with USA Swimming Inc. and serving in a meet capacity are allowed on deck. The only exceptions are timers and other pre-approved meet volunteers. Parents on deck without permission will first be asked to leave the pool deck. If a parent does not leave the pool deck, they will be asked to leave the swim meet.
- C. As a matter of courtesy, all questions swimmers or parents may have concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet should be referred to the coaching staff only. They, in turn, will pursue the matter through proper channels. Any complaints received by the team from a USA Swimming official or meet host with respect to a particular swimmer or parent will be dealt with in accordance with our Code of Conduct.
- D. As a matter of pride, leave the STAT team area in a neat and clean condition at the conclusion of each session.
- E. With regard to which events a swimmer competes in, the coaching staff shall have the final word. STAT team members are never to add or scratch events without first consulting a team coach.

### **3.7 Disciplinary Procedures**

The following are procedures that will be followed to ensure all families and swimmers enjoy the full benefit of their swimming and team experience.

**Behavior** – Every participant on the STAT team has a right to be treated with respect, dignity and fairness, and to participate in an environment that is enjoyable and safe. Harassment, abuse, and other forms of inappropriate behavior deny participants these rights and will not be tolerated. Swimmers and/or parents who are unable to meet our minimum acceptable behavior will be suspended from the team, but all financial obligations will still be expected and enforced.

**Counseling** - A coach will counsel a swimmer or parent who displays disrespectful behavior. If the behavior represents a serious lack of respect for another swimmer, coach, official, other adult, or facility, that swimmer's participation in the practice or meet may be terminated. In such a case, the swimmer's parent(s) will be notified of the circumstances in writing. The coach will also notify the Board of Directors when such action is taken.

Notification may include a warning that further manifestations of disrespectful behavior may result in suspension or dismissal from the team.

**Suspension** - A swimmer or parent may be required to reexamine his or her commitment to the sport and the team by being suspended temporarily from participation in swim practices, swim meets, and other activities sponsored by the team. The circumstances warranting such a suspension generally involve a serious breach of the Swimming Code of Conduct or team policies and procedures. A coach may recommend suspension to the Board of Directors who investigate and evaluate the event, reach a decision, and inform the swimmer's parent(s) verbally and in writing in a timely manner. In the event of suspension from the team, no refunds of fees paid will be made.

**Dismissal** - A swimmer or parent may be directed to terminate his or her affiliation with the STAT team for the remainder of the swimming season for an exceptionally serious breach or series of breaches of the Code of Conduct or team policies and procedures. A coach may recommend the dismissal of a swimmer or parent to the Board of Directors, who investigate and evaluate the event, reach a decision, and inform the swimmer's parent(is) verbally and in writing in a timely manner. In the event of dismissal from the team, no refunds of fees paid will be made.

### **3.8 Dry Land**

Dry-land activities are an important part of STAT training and are intended to be an integral part of each swimmer's training. Proper warm-up and cool-down exercises are important for the prevention of injuries. For this reason, warm-up/cool-down exercises should be performed before and after training. It will be the swimmer's and parent's responsibility to ensure the athlete is at practices and meets early enough so that they may complete their stretching and be ready for the start of warm-ups.

Remember that each wasted opportunity means one less step toward achieving your goals!

#### **3.8.1 Dryland Program Expectations:**

- A. Depending on the ages and groups, dryland training may consist of gentle pre-workout stretching or more vigorous strength training workouts.
- B. Arrive on time and plan to work the entire scheduled time. The planned workout takes anywhere from 15-45 minutes.
- C. Swimmers should be prepared to go outside for dry land exercises whenever the weather permits.

### **3.9 Equipment**

Parents are responsible for purchasing the following equipment for swimmers, depending on the practice group. For information on where to purchase equipment, please contact the coaches.

- A. **Novice 1:** swim cap, goggles, long-flexible rubber fins
- B. **Novice 2 :** swim cap, goggles, long-flexible rubber fins, **add:** swimmer's snorkel (different from a recreational snorkel)
- C. **Age Group:** swim cap, goggles, long-flexible rubber fins, swimmer's snorkel (different from a recreational snorkel), **add:** strokemaker paddles.
- D. **Juniors:** swim cap, goggles, long-flexible rubber fins, swimmer's snorkel (different from a recreational snorkel), strokemaker paddles, **add:** drag Sox, yoga mat
- E. **Seniors:** swim cap, goggles, long-flexible rubber fins, swimmer's snorkel (different from a recreational snorkel), strokemaker paddles, drag sox, yoga mat, **add:** tempo trainer

### 3.10 Parent Role in STAT Swimming

To have a successful program, there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress your swimmer makes depends to a great extent on this relationship. Whether you are just joining STAT or are a returning swimmer, we encourage you to take a moment to carefully read through this section. Every swimmer and their family should strive to build a relationship with his or her coach. Any practice or team related problems should be constructively addressed with the coach. Parents are welcome to email the coach or, if time permits and there are no swimmers in the area, speak to the coach after practice. **Parents are not permitted to engage the coach during practices or while the coaches are otherwise engaged with their swimmers.** Our swimmers' training and safety are our priority. Distracting a coach is a Code of Conduct violation. The coach's job is to motivate and constructively criticize the swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply the love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to make your swimmer work harder in practice, which in turn gives him/her the confidence to perform well. Be supportive at all times to ensure a positive experience for your swimmer.

Your "assignment" as a "Swim Parent" is to learn about the sport just like your swimmer, so you can both grow and love the sport together. It is best for parents to refrain from making stroke corrections or trying to coach their swimmer. If you disagree with something the coach is trying to do, please confer directly with the coach. Our coaches would enjoy the opportunity to further explain the STAT program to you.

### 3.11 Problems and Questions Procedure

All of your questions should be directed to the person who can answer or solve your problem. Follow the guidelines below to get answers and solve problems quickly. These guidelines promote open communication between parents, swimmers, and coaches.

**3.11.1** Problems or questions regarding practice, stroke instruction, meets, team rules, and the training program should be discussed with the individuals below, in the following order they are listed, until you are satisfied that the problem is resolved or the question answered.

A. Group Coach

B. STAT Head Coach

C. Board Of Directors

Coaches are usually available after practice unless there is another practice or too much activity on the pool deck to constructively converse. **Contacting coaches by email is the preferred method of communication and greatly appreciated.** If email is insufficient, you and the Coach can arrange a time to speak directly.

**3.11.2** Problems or questions regarding any other area of the team should be discussed with the Board of Directors until the problem is resolved or the question answered. Please refrain from discussing problems with other parents as this typically does not lend itself to constructive resolution. Very rarely, and only for real emergencies, will the Board of Directors meet outside of normal meeting times. If you need to address the Board of Directors or need their assistance to resolve any difficulties, you are encouraged to notify them so that you can be included on the normal meeting agenda.

## **4.0 SWIM MEETS**

### **4.1 Meet Schedule**

Each season's meet schedule is announced within the first two weeks of a new season: short course season, 25 yards, in September and long course season, 50 meters, in April. Please review this schedule at the start of the season to determine which meets your athlete should attend. If you have questions as to which meets are appropriate for your swimmer, please contact a coach.

- A. The meet schedule will be established by the coaching staff. It is recommended that swimmers attend as many of the scheduled meets (appropriate to their level) as possible, so that they have a measure of what they have been working towards and know what to continue to work on or what they need to work harder on based on their performances.
- B. On average, we want all team members to compete once every three or four weeks. This allows the swimmer enough time between competition to sufficiently develop new skills and master old ones. The meet schedule is established with this in mind. In some cases, meets of a similar classification are scheduled as close to two weeks apart or as far as five weeks apart. This happens when the meets available to us offer no other alternative. The only caveat is when a coach feels a swimmer is not ready for competition. Typically, in this case, the coach feels the swimmer is not technically ready (and will get disqualified) or physically ready. With the coach's help and a focus on training, we expect these swimmers to, at some point, join their peers.

C. As a general rule, STAT does not permit any swimmer to compete in a competition on two successive weekends unless during championship season.

#### **4.2 Deciding to Enter a Meet**

Coaches are responsible for determining which meets and events swimmers are eligible to participate in and giving their recommendation as to which meets the swimmer should attend. The coach has total discretion in making all individual and relay entries. The schedule for meets will be provided to parents on the website as soon as the information becomes available. Swimmers should attend only team-scheduled meets. As a member of STAT, swimmers are not allowed to register for meets that won't be attended by the team or for special competitions that have not received the approval of our Head Coach. If a problem arises, the swimmer should notify the coach as soon as possible. If a swimmer is granted special permission to participate in a meet that the team is not attending, the coach will arrange his or her registration.

#### **4.3 Signing Up For Meets**

- A. When the coaches receive the meet announcement from the host team, they will send a team-wide email with meet dates and the sign-up deadline. The meet announcement itself will be posted on the STAT website ([www.swimstat.org](http://www.swimstat.org)) as soon as it becomes available to the coaches. Parents will be required to indicate on the meet tab, using their account login, if the swimmer will attend or decline this opportunity.
- B. Coaches are responsible for entering swimmers in meets and choosing the appropriate events. The coaching staff has the final word in which events a swimmer enters for competition. Once this is complete, the coaches will email the preliminary entries to the team. Any questions or corrections need to be discussed with the coach via email. Even if you discuss it with them verbally, please include an email.
- C. After coaches complete the entry process and receive confirmation that entries have been accepted, these are posted on our website (under the event/functions section of our home page). This is your confirmation that you have been entered in the meet. If there is a problem with the meet entry sheet, please contact a coach immediately.
- D. Occasionally, and regrettably, a swimmer will not be entered in an event or meet that they should swim. If space is available and the meet director is willing, a late entry may be allowed. In some cases, the host club may require an additional fee. Sign-ups must be made by the due date. Meet information, including sign-up deadlines, will be included in e-mail correspondence. **LATE SIGN-UPS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Once entries are sent, the fees for the meet are paid and you will be charged for these fees through your account.
- E. One or two days prior to the meet, the team will send an email regarding timing assignments. Parents of all swimmers attending the meet should expect to cover a timing assignment. The time will depend on the number of swimmers attending and

the number of timing slots/lanes that need to be covered by the team. The team understands that you may have extenuating circumstances that require special consideration. Please refer to the timing assignment requirements on our website for how to handle this. Please understand that while we will make every effort to accommodate you, we cannot give guarantees since we are obligated by the host team to provide volunteers per their needs. If you are working as a trained official or are in the process of training, you will not be required to fill a timing slot during that meet.

*NOTE: For STAT Hosted meets, ALL parents will be required to work their timing assignments as well as additional positions. This will be posted on the website in advance for signup.*

#### **4.4 Types of U.S.A. Swim Meets**

Every season, STAT participates in a variety of swim meets ranging from B/C (for more novice swimmers) to national level meets. When a meet announcement is emailed to the team, the coaches will make note of eligibility requirements. Whenever in doubt, please speak directly to your coach. The above meet classifications may vary from meet to meet. Read the meet invitations carefully to determine eligibility.

#### **4.5 Swim Meet Procedures**

- A. Meet announcements are posted on our website along with entries, warm up times, and timing assignments.
- B. Swimmers should report to their coach in shorts/sweatpants (swim suit underneath) with cap and goggles fifteen minutes prior to warm-up times
- C. Each group has a specific warm-up time. Be familiar with this prior to the meet - it will be posted on our website and emailed to families before the day of the meet.
- D. All STAT swimmers are required to wear the blue team cap. A team suit is recommended. Boys must wear jammers or briefs. Recreational swim trunks are not permitted.
- E. Each STAT swimmer is responsible for knowing which events they are swimming and for being present in the team area prior to each race.
- F. Swimmers will discuss events, race strategy, goals etc. with coaches per their priority - as a group or individuals and when coaches deem appropriate.
- G. At the conclusion of each race, a swimmer must report to a STAT Coach. This gives the coaches an opportunity to discuss the race with each swimmer and add positive comments concerning splits, stroke technique, race strategy, etc.
- H. At most meets, electronic timing is used. The official time is generally the one recorded in the computer by the swimmer touching the touchpad and appearing on the scoreboard. If a swimmer misses the touchpad or there is a mechanical failure, various back-up times

may be used. The timing and scorekeeping personnel analyze all times to determine the official times that are then posted as final results.

- I. In between races, swimmers are asked to rest and stay warm. Please ensure your swimmer is wearing something over their swim suit so their muscles do not get cold. All energy is to be stored up and used in competition, for swimming or for supporting teammates.
- J. It is very important that swimmers check in with coaches and get permission before leaving the meet.
- K. Hunger and dehydration can lead to poor performance. Please be sure that swimmers are drinking water and eating healthy snacks throughout the meet.
- L. What to bring to a meet:
  - a. STAT team suit or race suit – depending on level of meet
  - b. two STAT caps
  - c. two pairs of goggles
  - d. two towels
  - e. blanket, sleeping bag, or parka
  - f. quiet games or books
  - g. iPod to relax before races
  - h. water bottle and healthy snacks
  - i. foldable chair if room on deck.
- M. If swimming in preliminary races (prelims), have your swimmer check with their coach to be sure that they have not qualified for finals before leaving the pool. Swimmers may not scratch from finals unless there are clear reasons for doing so and only after conferring with their coach. Failure to do so may result in the swimmer being barred from competing in the rest of the meet.

#### **4.6 Policies and Hints for Dealing with Meet Procedures**

There are several USA Swimming rules that govern swim meets with regard to prelims and finals. The following are policies that all participants in USA Swimming sanctioned meets must adhere to. Please familiarize yourself with these:

1. Positive check-in events: The coaching staff is responsible for checking any swimmer in for their events. Usually all 400IM, 500, 1000, and 1650 Freestyle events will be check-in events. The meet host will have a set time that all swimmers must be checked in by if they are going to swim. If they are not checked in, they will not be permitted to swim. Once checked in, if a swimmer misses the event, they will be automatically scratched from their next individual event or events, depending on the meet.

**2. Relays:** Relays are a team effort. While every STAT swimmer should expect to swim a relay, not all swimmers will be selected to do so, as STAT does not always form relays for non-championship meets. It is extremely important for swimmers to be on time to the meet, as relays are sometimes swum at the beginning of each session. The coaching staff will have the final say on relay team members. Before you leave the pool, check with the coaching staff to make sure you aren't in any relays. Parents may allow their swimmer to opt out of relays at the beginning of the season. If your family chooses to opt out, your swimmer will not swim any relays for the entire season. If a swimmer is signed up for a meet, the assumption is that they are eligible to swim a relay. Families are not permitted to pick and choose relays.

**3. Final events:** Before you leave the pool after prelims, double check the results to see if you qualified for finals. If you are an alternate, someone ahead of you may scratch. If you are swimming in finals make sure you know when warm-ups begin before you leave. Failure to show up for a final event results in an athlete being scratched from the rest of the meet.

#### **4.7 Championship Swim Meets**

These are USA Swimming Age Group and Senior Championships, USA Swimming Age Group Zone and Sectional Meets, USA Swimming Junior and Senior Nationals, and Olympic Trials. These meets are open to swimmers who qualify. Information will be provided during the swim year.

#### **4.8 Competition Age Groups**

Swimmers compete in age group categories: 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, and 17-18. These age groups may vary from meet to meet. For example, instead of having separate categories for 8 and under and 10 and under, they may be combined as "10 and under." Similarly, 15-16 and 17-18 may be grouped as 15-18.

#### **4.9 Classification (Time Standards)**

Swimmers are classified according to the time they swim in a given event. Time criteria is established by USA Swimming and is subject to change each October. Time standards are established for both LONG COURSE (times swum in a 50-meter pool) and SHORT COURSE (times swum in a 25-yard or 25-meter pool).

#### **4.10 Gender Diversity and Inclusion**

##### **4.10.1 Gender Designation**

When a current minor member athlete transitions and wishes to compete in their gender identity, the athlete or their designee should request a change of the athlete's gender in SWIMS by contacting Diversity & Inclusion staff at USA Swimming at [inclusion@usaswimming.org](mailto:inclusion@usaswimming.org). Once this process is completed, the athlete will be able to be entered and compete in events that match their gender identity.

The US Center for Safe Sport and USA Swimming prohibit discrimination against any member or participant on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, gender expression, and gender identity (304.3.3). In the event that a question should arise about whether an athlete's request to participate in a manner consistent with their gender identity is bona fide, USA Swimming will refer to the Code of Conduct and follow its standard procedures of enforcement.

#### **4.10.2 Competition Apparel**

Per USA Swimming's Rule Book in article 102.8.1 B "In swimming competitions, the swimmer must wear only one swimsuit in one or two pieces, except as provided in 205.10.1. All swimsuits shall be made from textile materials. For men, the swimsuit shall not extend above the navel nor below the knees, and for women, shall not cover the neck, extend past the shoulder, nor extend below the knee." Any athlete requesting a deviation from this policy must submit a swimsuit waiver to the Chair of Rules and Regulations Committee. The current Chair is Clark Hammond (ruleregs@gmail.com). No exemption to the swimsuit rule will be made that gives a swimmer a competitive advantage (i.e. tech suits). It is important for all members to be aware of relevant state laws with regards to appropriate coverage.

#### **4.10.3 Bathrooms and Locker Rooms**

Meet Directors and Club Leadership will be able to provide information about gender-neutral bathroom and changing room options at the host facility for meets.

## **5.0 SWIMMER RECOGNITION**

### **5.1 Achievement Ribbons**

"Personal Best" time improvement ribbons or prizes are awarded to swimmers in Novice I and II for each improvement of their best time in sanctioned USA Swimming meets. The ribbons/prizes will be handed to the swimmer directly after their swim during the coaches' review, based on ribbon/prize availability.

### **5.2 Awards Banquet**

There is an Awards Banquet held each year at the end of the Short Course season. During the program, recognition and participation awards are presented to swimmers in a manner determined by the coaching staff. The current Short Course season and prior year's Long Course Season are recognized.

## **6.0 COMMUNICATIONS**

The dissemination of information to all members and families on the team and the feedback of data are of paramount importance to the Board of Directors. We currently utilize all popular methods to ensure information is passed to the team.

## **6.1 Coaches and Staff**

Email the Coaches or talk with them after practices at the appropriate time. Check our website [www.swimstat.org](http://www.swimstat.org) "Contact Tab" on our home page for email links to coaches, or any other volunteer member of the team.

## **6.2 Handbook**

The STAT handbook is a combination of general information necessary for new team members and useful information for returning members. The handbook is located on the team website.

## **6.3 Mailboxes**

A file box with folders for each family is located on deck just past the front lobby at the JRSSC. All members are urged to check their folder regularly. Coaches and the Treasurer all have folders that you are encouraged to use to drop off payments or any other important information/paperwork.

## **6.4 WebSite**

Our web page address is [www.swimstat.org](http://www.swimstat.org). This site has team records, meet information (meet announcements, meet entries, warm-up information, meet results), the handbook, newsletters, information about social events, practice and meet schedules, links to our store affiliates (Sportsfairusa.com, Amazon, team vendors, partners) and more.

## **6.5 Bulletin Board**

STAT maintains a bulletin board inside the pool area at the JRSSC which features general information, team records, and Coaches' bios.

## **6.6 Email**

Email is used as much as possible. In general, emails are sent concerning meet sign-ups, meet results, fundraising activities, monthly schedules, and schedule changes.

## **6.7 Newsletters**

STAT puts out a regular monthly newsletter. In an effort to consolidate as much information as possible and to eliminate unnecessary emails, the newsletter is our tool for communicating any upcoming calendars (meets, practices), team changes, fundraising opportunities, social events, messages from our coaches, and swimmer recognition.

## **6.8 Communications for short notice on cancellations of practice/other STAT activities**

### **6.8.1 Remind**

Because the team practices six days a week, coupled with all-day swim meets on weekends, there is always the possibility that the Board will need to get information to you

quickly (the result of inclement weather, changes to a meet schedule, etc.). We will communicate these messages using the Remind.

You can sign up for our Remind account by doing one or both of the following:

- A. Text @statswimt to 81010
- B. Download the Remind app from the Apple Store or Play Store
  - a. Click on the menu
  - b. Select "Add class"
  - c. Select "Join existing class"
  - d. After the @, type statswimt

## **7.0 PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

STAT expects each parent to become a proactive member of the team by volunteering when necessary (e.g., timing and officiating). Parents are also expected to provide their swimmer with the appropriate equipment (suits, fins, etc.), transportation to practices and meets, proper food and rest, and unconditional encouragement and interest in the child's swimming activities. Parents must also meet their financial obligations to the team.

### **7.1 Volunteer Policy**

Since STAT is a volunteer, non-profit, parent-run organization, we cannot operate without parental involvement. The following is vital to the success of the team:

- A. Each family that has a swimmer participating in a meet that requires volunteers (i.e. timers) must work at least one session (typically not more than two hours) for the meet (Officiating counts toward this requirement). Volunteer assignments will be coordinated prior to the meet and tracked to ensure an equitable and fair distribution of available volunteer positions. If you cancel your child's participation prior to the meet and prior to signups for timing, please email your child's coach and a board member.
- B. Parents who do not accompany their swimmer to a meet must coordinate with other parents to fulfill their volunteer obligation. Parents who are aware of a conflict during a particular session are to find your own replacement once signups have been completed. If you are a "no show," you will be charged \$100.00, which will be applied to the account of the family whose timing assignment was extended as a result of your no show. If families are repeatedly considered "no-shows," STAT will NOT allow your swimmer to compete in future meets.
- C. STAT strongly encourages parents to become USA Swimming certified as a stroke and turn judge, score keeper, clerk of the course, CTS operator, starter, and/or referee. Contact the STAT Official Chair for more information ([gostatswim.officials@gmail.com](mailto:gostatswim.officials@gmail.com)). STAT will reimburse any USA Swimming membership fee upon successful completion of the training

program. A copy of your payment needs to be forwarded to the team Treasurer for reimbursement. It is important to note that STAT needs parents to become certified Officials, so that the Team can be self-sufficient for STAT-hosted meets and not consistently relying on non-meet-participating certified Officials.

## **8.0 TEAM GROUP STRUCTURE**

STAT currently consists of a variety of group programs, which provides a natural and sensible progression through which the swimmer moves as they grow and mature. This structure is designed to encourage and enhance a swimmer's enthusiasm for the sport and to meet the needs of swimmers at all levels of ability. Swimmers are moved from one group to another based on the agreement of the coaches, the swimmer, and the parents. Both the giving and receiving coaches must agree that the swimmer is ready to handle the advanced workout.

### **8.1 Novice I** - Ages 5 and up; should attend practice 2-3 days per week

Entry-level group designed to teach all four strokes in a safe and fun environment. Must be able to swim at least one lap of the pool, unassisted.

### **8.2 Novice II** - Ages 8 & Up; should attend 3-4 practices per week

Designed for swimmers who can demonstrate all four strokes and have had minimum meet experience. Swimmers in this group should be able to listen well and follow instructions in a group environment. Emphasis is on legal execution and technical improvement of all four strokes and proper starts and turns.

### **8.3 Age Group** - Ages 10 & Up; should attend at least 4 practices per week

Designed for those swimmers who have competitive meet experience, can demonstrate all four strokes effectively and consistently, and demonstrate proper starts and turns. Swimmers in this group will experience more in-depth training to help improve their overall endurance as well as the fundamentals of proper stroke technique in preparation for the Junior Group.

**8.4 Juniors** - Ages 11 & Up; should attend at least 5 practices per week during short course season (September-End of the school year), and 7-8 per week during long course season (June, July)

Designed for advanced swimmers who demonstrate the ability to swim all strokes and have competitive experience. Swimmers will work to improve overall endurance, power, and speed and will continue to improve on their stroke mechanics. Places more emphasis on ability to grasp all basic skills and on building mental toughness and racing strategies. Junior swimmers should attend meets on a regular basis.

**8.5 Seniors** - Ages 13&Up; should attend 5-6 practices per week during short course season (September - End of the school year) and 9-10 practices per week during long course season (June -July). Meeting attendance and Saturday practices are mandatory!

Designed for athletes 13 years and older, who can perform quality swimming of all strokes at high volumes. Swimmers should demonstrate consistency on basic skills learned in prior groups or from prior experience. Senior swimming requires a major commitment and dedication to the sport. Senior Group places a huge emphasis on training basic endurance, power, and speed while maintaining proper stroke mechanics, goal setting, race strategy, and mental training.

## **8.6 High School Prep**

Swimmers must be 13 years or older and legal in all four strokes. The Head Coach reserves the right to make exceptions on an individual basis.

High School Prep is tailored specifically for swimmers who enjoy swimming and want to improve their stroke technique but who are unable to commit to a high demand practice schedule. These swimmers train three times per week for one hour, starting at the beginning of Short Course Season and running until HS swim practices start. Any swimmer who wants to transition to year-round swimming following this session will need to pay the full team registration fee at that time.

## **9.0 ORGANIZATION**

### **9.1 Board of Directors**

The general management of STAT is the responsibility of a Board of Directors consisting of team members' parents who volunteer to serve in the capacities of President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Chair, and Registrar Director (Membership).

### **9.2 Position Descriptions**

- A. President: Responsible for the overall activities of the team, running the Executive Board, holding parents' meetings, and negotiating with coaches. Assists in the development of future plans as required for team growth and stability.
- B. Vice President: Fills President's role if they are unavailable, oversight of the organization of the swim team and staff, establishment of the qualifications for and hiring of the staff and coaches. Robert's Rules of Order shall be used as a guide when executing these duties. Assists in the development of future plans as required for team growth and stability.
- C. Secretary: Maintains all correspondence, minutes, and files and performs team clerical duties as needed in support of the Board of Directors.
- D. Treasurer: Responsible for all membership invoicing, payments, collections and payroll.
- E. Registrar Director: Works with the Treasurer to approve accounts and register all current swimmers with STAT/USA Swimming each season. Will also register any transfers during the season.

F. Social Chair: Heads team social committee and has the responsibility for coordinating non-swimming team events, to include holiday parties, annual banquets, birthday recognitions, and other team- or spirit- building activities. Also helps to coordinate workers for any team event or activity.

G. Head Coach: Serves in a non-voting advisory capacity.

### **9.3 Terms of Office**

The members of the Board of Directors serve two-year terms. Elections are held in the Spring when positions become open.

### **9.4 Board of Directors Meetings**

The Board of Directors meets monthly, with additional meetings scheduled as necessary. Meetings are scheduled on the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm unless there is a team scheduling conflict (e.g., swim meet or team social event). Board Meetings are open to all STAT parents. Please notify the board of your planned attendance and any questions via email prior to the meeting.

### **9.5 Committees**

Standing committees are appointed by the President as required. The Board of Directors' form special committees as the need arises. Our committees serve an indispensable need in the management and administration of our team and ensure current and future fiscal well-being. The hard work and creative talents of our parents ensure our team's survival. Please get involved; your efforts will benefit your child and the team.

### **9.6 New Season Orientation**

New season orientations are held within two weeks of the first day of practice. All parents are strongly encouraged to attend. Additional meetings are scheduled as required to ensure important information is communicated to parents.

### **9.7 Special Meetings**

Special meetings of the organization may be called during the calendar year by the President or an appointee of the Board of Directors, as needed. Any team member requesting a special board meeting will be asked to attend the monthly Board of Directors meeting. The team President or Vice President is available for individual consultation when needed, however, in order to ensure transparency and provide documentation backup, all consultations are encouraged to be via the team @gmail accounts.

### **9.8 Virginia Swimming**

STAT is a member of Virginia Swimming, Inc. (VSI) which operates under the direction of USA Swimming. The teams in Virginia Swimming are divided into several areas, regions, or districts for competition. STAT is part of the Northern Virginia District and is represented in

the House of Delegates by both an adult and an athlete delegate appointed by team. The House of Delegates meets two times a year in Richmond. Short Course and Long Course meet times and locations can be found on VSI's website along with current Virginia swimmer top ten times.

## **10.0 EXPENSES**

### **10.1 STAT Yearly Dues**

As we begin each swim year, the Board of Directors relies upon electronically signed contracts to make budgetary decisions. The STAT membership fee structure is included in the annual contract. The coaching staff places swimmers in one of the several different practice groups based on age, maturity, ability, and space availability. The coaching staff also determines when a swimmer is ready to move to a more advanced practice group. Yearly dues increase when a swimmer is moved into a more advanced practice group. Swimmers participating in a more advanced program will not have their tuition adjusted if they move to a lower one unless it is the result of an injury or TAKES PLACE IN THE FIRST THREE MONTHS OF THE SHORT COURSE SEASON (SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 1).

**PAYMENT PLANS:** STAT offers two payment plans for our 11-month programs: (1) Payment in full plan offers a 2.5% discount off the ten-month plan (must be paid by September 1, or the total due converts to the ten-month amount) or: (2) ten-month payment plan - program fees are due in ten equal monthly payments; due on the 1st of the month, September – May. High School Prep (HSP) fees are due in full September 1.

**FAMILY DISCOUNT PLAN:** The family discount plan for 11-month programs is as follows: after arranging the swimmers in order from highest to lowest cost practice groups, the second and subsequent swimmers are discounted 2.5 percent off the single swimmer dues in that practice group. (High School Prep is not eligible for this discount as it is not an 11-month program.)

**MONTHLY INVOICES:** Each family will receive emailed monthly statements that will break down fees into the following categories: Dues, Meet Fees, and Miscellaneous.

Monthly dues are invoiced September through May and all other fees (e.g., meets fees and gear purchases) are invoiced September through August.

The Registration Fee(s) payment is due with your family's contract.

Subsequent payments are due on the first day of each month beginning in September. We strongly encourage families to pay via ACH within Team Unify.

- A. Checks should be made payable to STAT and mailed to STAT, P.O. Box 836, Stafford, VA 22555 or placed in the STAT Mailbox at the JRSSC. At any time, you may view your invoice or account by logging on to Team Unify via [www.swimstat.org](http://www.swimstat.org).

- B. Current and projected costs for the 1st of the following month will be listed.
- C. If full payment of the monthly invoice is not received by the 7th of the month, it is considered late. A \$40.00 late fee will be applied to the next month's invoice.
- D. If payments are not paid as due, the team is under no obligation to enter your swimmer(s) in upcoming meets.
- E. Accounts 30 days overdue will preclude swimmers from practicing with their group until the account is made current.
- F. If your check is returned due to insufficient funds, you will be charged for any expenses incurred by the team in addition to a \$50 returned check fee.
- G. Should collection actions on your account become necessary, you will be responsible for all costs associated with collections actions, to include court costs and/or legal fees.
- H. All funds owed to STAT from the previous swimming year must be paid in full before the swimmer is allowed to register for the new swimming year.

## **10.2 Establishing and Maintaining USA Swimming Membership**

STAT agrees to provide a one-year membership from September 1 of the current year through August 31 of the following year. STAT encourages families with more than one year-round swimmer to commit to only one year-round team. Teams within a close proximity to one another may not participate in the same meet schedule each year, to include out-of-town meets. Year-round swimming is an intense sport. It has been STAT's experience that multi team memberships create undue hardships and scheduling conflicts affecting both swimmers and caregivers. Summer swim teams and high school swim teams are exceptions.

**Registration:** There is a \$200.00 registration fee for each swimmer, which is separate from your swimmer program fees. This fee includes the USA Swimming athlete registration fee, team registration fees, and a team t-shirt and swim cap, which will be handed out at the beginning of the season. Registration fee is due at time of sign-up.

## **10.3 Swimmer Meet Fees**

STAT swimmers will be eligible to swim in a variety of competitive meets. Meet registration fees and event fees vary from meet to meet. Each family will be informed of all meet fees (located in the meet announcement) before entering a swimmer in a meet. Meet fees will also include:

- A. Relay fees for each swimmer participating in a relay. If you do not want your swimmer to be considered for relays, please inform the Head Coach at the beginning of the season; otherwise, all swimmers will be considered.

- B. Each swimmer will have a team surcharge of \$5.00 per swimmer to help offset the Coaches expenses for travelling to meets; this will be a \$10 expense for out-of-state or championship meets.

Families will be billed for all meet entry fees via the monthly statement. There are no refunds for a swimmer who enters a meet and then does not attend the meet. It is the responsibility of the swimmer and family to note meet entry deadlines after which no entries will be registered except in extraordinary circumstances. Swimmers may not register for a meet as an independent unless under extraordinary circumstances and only with the approval of the coaches.

#### **10.4 Resignations**

Only first year competitive swimmers will be afforded the option of terminating this contract once entered into as long as written notification is provided by December 1 of the current year. Exceptions to this policy are:

- A. Swimmers age 8 or younger as of September 30, current year.
- B. Physician-documented medical conditions.
- C. Family relocation outside the greater Stafford, VA area.
- D. All requests for release from financial obligation must be made in writing by e-mail to the board: [gostatswim@gmail.com](mailto:gostatswim@gmail.com). **Verbal notices will not be accepted.** The request, if approved by the Board of Directors, will take effect at the end of the month in which the written request is received. Partial months are not pro-rated. Registration fees are not refundable following the start of the season. The family will be responsible for all financial obligations until written notice is approved.

Any swimmer who registers for a program but chooses to move to a lesser program must do so by December 1, of the applicable season and only with Coach approval. After December 1, the family will be obligated to pay the original tuition amount. Exceptions are those swimmers changing programs due to a physician-verified medical condition.

#### **11.0 TRAVEL POLICY**

**As part of USA Swimming's enhanced athlete protection efforts, USA Swimming rules require clubs and Local Swimming Committees (LSCs) to have published policies for team travel.**

##### **11.1 Introduction**

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. Club and LSC travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club. STAT's travel policy is a compilation of required and recommended policies extracted from USA

Swimming and Virginia Swimming Inc. our LSC that provides the tools to conduct safe and organized team travel.

## **11.2 Team Travel Policy**

### **Section 1 - USA Swimming Required Policies**

These items are Code of Conduct stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook. • Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches and other adults traveling with the club. (305.5.D) • Travel Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming administered criminal background check. (305.5.B) • 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 particular athlete). (305.5.A)

- a. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parents' (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach. (305.5C)

### **Section 2 - STAT Policies**

Items A through D are travel-related recommendations taken directly from USA Swimming's Best Practice Guidelines for Athlete Protection.

- A. During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained.
- B. Athletes should not ride in a coach's vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete, unless prior parental permission is obtained.
- C. During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes they shall be of the same gender and should be of similar age. Where athletes are age 13 & Over, chaperones and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms. When athletes are age 12 & Under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the athlete and written consent should be given by the athlete's parents (or legal guardian).
- D. When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, at the competition the coach and athlete should attempt to establish a "buddy" club to associate with during the competition and when away from the venue.
- E. To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes in female athlete's rooms and no female athletes in male athlete's rooms (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse of that particular athlete).

- An athlete will be assigned to share a hotel room based on their gender identity. An athlete who requests extra privacy will be accommodated whenever possible.
- F. A copy of the Club Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian.
- G. Team will obtain a signed Liability Release and/or Indemnification Form for each athlete.
- H. Team will carry a signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form for each athlete.
- I. Curfews shall be established by the coaches and/or chaperones each day of the trip.
- J. Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc. unless otherwise excused or instructed by the head coach or his/her designee.
- K. The directions & decisions of coaches/chaperones are final.
- L. Swimmers are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip.
- M. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach or chaperone.
- N. When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theatres, etc., swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons. 12 & Under athletes will be accompanied by a chaperone.
- O. The Head Coach or his/her designee shall make a written report of travel policy or code of conduct violations to the STAT Board of Directors and the parent or legal guardian of any affected minor athlete.

### **Section 3 - Other Policies**

#### Transportation

- A. All swimmers must agree to travel with the team to be considered in the selection process and must agree to remain with the team for the entire duration of the trip.
- B. Swimmers may be released from the team after the completion of the entire competition, and prior to the return trip home. A Parent or legal guardian must complete and sign a release form. All swimmers that are being released must obtain permission from the Head Coach, or his/her designee, prior to leaving the competition site, lodging, and meals

- C. Swimmers will be required to dine and lodge with the team for the duration of the meet. This includes all designated rest times.
- D. Rooming assignments, including the number of occupants per room, is at the sole discretion of the Team Manager. Special requests and roommate requests will be considered but not guaranteed.
- E. Special dietary needs should be addressed at the appropriate registration.

### Cost

- A. The cost per swimmer will be determined by the location, means of travel, length of meet, and the number of team members.
- B. The approximate cost of the trip will be posted to STAT's website as soon as it is available. That cost may be adjusted at the time of registration.
- C. The STAT Board of Directors reserves the right to assess an additional fee should the actual costs of the team exceed projected revenues.
- D. Swimmers may not order room service without permission.
- E. Swimmers are responsible for all incidental charges.
- F. Swimmers are responsible for any damages or thievery at the hotel.
- G. Swimmers must participate in contracted group meals.

### Chaperones

- A. Prospective chaperones will indicate their interest to a team manager when an approved travel meet has been determined.
- B. Chaperones are selected according to the following priorities:
  - Medical - 1 per departure location.
  - Officials - USA stroke and turn certified. Preference will be given to USA National certified officials.
  - A balance of males and females are needed across the age groups.
  - Number of chaperones will depend upon how the meet is done (1 set of prelims and 1 set of finals or 10 and under swimming separately).
  - Previous chaperone experience may also be taken into consideration.
- C. The cost per chaperone will be determined by the location, means of travel, length of meet, and the number of team members.
- D. The approximate cost of the trip will be posted to STAT's website as soon as it is available. Chaperones are responsible for their own travel cost.
- E. All chaperones share in timing at the meet, unless they are working as officials.

- F. All chaperones must be members of USA Swimming. Registration may be done at the time of selection as a chaperone. The cost of this registration is the responsibility of the chaperone.
- G. All chaperones must have initiated a background check through USA Swimming's approved vendor prior to departure for the trip. The cost of this check is the responsibility of the chaperone.

### Safety

- A. Only use hotel rooms with interior entrances.
- B. Must wear seat belts and remain seated in vehicles.

### Coaches

- A. Determine travel meets and eligibility requirements.
- B. Establish which age groups will travel as a team.
- C. Parent(s) responsible for getting swimmer(s) to stated departure point.
- D. There is no requirement for families to attend "Team Travel Meets".

### **11.3 Travel Dress Requirements**

Items that are not acceptable for travel include the following:

- A. Jogging shorts/running shorts/"cut-off" shorts (or any shorts or other similar article of clothing shorter than mid-thigh).
- B. Skirts and dresses shorter than mid-thigh.
- C. Underwear as outerwear, inappropriately sheer, tight or short clothing.
- D. Garments (e.g. "midriffs"; halter tops; backless clothing; "tube" tops; garments made of fishnet, mesh, or similar material; tank tops; "muscle" tops; etc.) that inappropriately bare or expose traditionally private parts of the body including, but not limited to, the stomach, buttocks, back and breasts.
- E. Sagging clothing.
- F. Any clothing, paraphernalia, grooming, jewelry, accessories or body adornments that contain advertisement, symbols, words, slogans, patches, or pictures that are sexually suggestive; that are drug, tobacco, or alcohol related; or that are obscene, profane, vulgar, lewd, indecent, or plainly offensive.

### **11.4 USA Safe Sport information for parents / swimmers**

**Safe sport Links - This can also be found on the team webpage under the "Safe Sport" Tab <https://www.teamunify.com/vsstat/UserFiles/File/EducationForAthletes.pdf>**

[https://www.teamunify.com/vsstat/UserFiles/File/Safe%20Sport%20Handbook-FINAL\(1\).pdf](https://www.teamunify.com/vsstat/UserFiles/File/Safe%20Sport%20Handbook-FINAL(1).pdf) <https://www.teamusa.org/stopabuse>  
<https://www.teamunify.com/vsstat/UserFiles/File/SafeSportParentFlyer.pdf>

## **12.0 STAT FORMS - travel and other**

### **12.1 STAT ATHLETE CODE OF CONDUCT & PARENTAL CONSENT**

Proper behavior has a positive influence on individual and team performance. The following Code of Conduct establishes minimum standards that will be administered by Stafford Aquatic Team, Inc. Upon notification of any violation of the Code of Conduct, the Head Coach or designee shall promptly investigate the circumstances of the violation and determine what disciplinary action, if any, shall be taken. All athletes and athlete's parents/guardians are required to acknowledge and support this code. Any additional guidelines regarding conduct will be presented at team meetings. All athletes are required to follow the direction of the staff members.

In addition to the Team's standard Code of Conduct, the undersigned athlete member participating in a Travel Meet agrees to abide by the standards of conduct outlined below:

- A. All athletes are required to attend all team meetings, training sessions, and events unless excused by the coaching staff.
- B. All athletes must adhere to established curfews.
- C. All athletes will not possess or use alcohol, tobacco, or any illegal or banned substances.
- D. All athletes will follow guidelines established for mixed company (male and female) in the athlete's room. No male and female athlete pair shall be in an athlete's room alone under any circumstances.
- E. All athletes will refrain from all illegal or inappropriate behaviors that would detract from a positive image of the team or be detrimental to its performance objectives.
- F. All athletes will display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, administrators, fellow competitors, and the public.
- G. All athletes will remain for the entire competition.
- H. All athletes will refrain from any cell phone use at the aquatic center, team meetings, and designated quiet times

I \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have read the above and agree to honor the STAT Code of Conduct. I further acknowledge that failure to do so may result in consequences to include being asked to leave practice (but remain on the pool deck), temporary suspension from practices, being temporarily barred from attending swim meets and/or removal from the team - the latter of which will be the result only after three verbal warnings (in front of a witness) and one written warning signed by the swimmer and parent/guardians. Should this occur, all financial obligations must still be fulfilled.

Athlete Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Athlete Cell  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Athlete Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents are asked to acknowledge and support the Code of Conduct specified above.  
I have read and understood the above requirements.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Athlete's Parent/Guardian)

### 12.2 ATHLETE'S MEDICAL INFORMATION AND AUTHORIZATION

Athlete's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Physician's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Physician's Phone:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Co: \_\_\_\_\_ Policy  
#: \_\_\_\_\_

\*It would be helpful to pack a copy of your child's insurance card with them on the trip.\*

*THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT MUST BE COMPLETED WITH A SIGNATURE AND DATE:*

In case of emergency, when I cannot be reached, Virginia Swimming Inc., and any representative thereof, including the chaperone, or coach, has my permission to take the athlete named above, to any hospital, and the hospital staff and its medical staff have my permission to provide treatment which a physician deems necessary for the well-being of the above named athlete.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature: (Athlete's Parent/Guardian) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

YOU MUST FURNISH THE NAMES OF MEDICATION AND ALLERGIES :

Medication	Initial	Date


**INITIAL AND DATE EACH ENTRY OF MEDICATION THE ABOVE ATHLETE IS PRESENTLY TAKING LIST ANY ALLERGIES TO FOOD, DRINK, MEDICINE OR DRUGS:**

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INITIALS

\_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN TO: Stafford Aquatic Team, Inc.  
ATTN: Team Manager  
P.O. Box 836  
Stafford VA 22556



## CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Parent/Guardian and Athletes,

This information sheet is provided to assist you and your child in recognizing the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Every athlete is different and responds to a brain injury differently, so seek medical attention if you suspect your child has a concussion. Once a concussion occurs, it is very important your athlete return to normal activities slowly, so he/she does not do more damage to his/her brain.

### What is a Concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain that may be caused by a blow, bump, or jolt to the head. Concussions may also happen after a fall or hit that jars the brain. A blow elsewhere on the body can cause a concussion even if an athlete does not hit his/her head directly. Concussions can range from mild to severe.

### Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

Athletes do not have to be "knocked out" to have a concussion. In fact, less than 1 out of 10 concussions result in loss of consciousness. Concussion symptoms can develop right away or up to 48 hours after the injury. Ignoring any signs or symptoms of a concussion puts your child's health at risk!

### Signs Observed by Coaches, Officials, Parents or Guardians

- Appears dazed, stunned or confused
- Unsure about event, location or name of meet
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes – irritability, sadness, nervousness, emotional
- Can't recall events before or after incident

### Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Any headache or "pressure" in head - how badly it hurts does not matter
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"
- Trouble falling asleep
- Sleeping more or less than usual

### **Be Honest**

Encourage your athlete to be honest with you, his/her coach and your health care provider about his/her symptoms. Many young athletes get caught up in the moment and/or feel pressured to return to sports before they are ready. It is better to miss practice or meets than the entire season... or risk permanent damage!

### **Seek Medical Attention Right Away**

Seeking medical attention on the day of the event is an important first step if you suspect or are told your swimmer has a concussion. A qualified health care professional will be able to determine how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports and other daily activities:

- No athlete should return to activity on the same day he/she gets a concussion
- No athlete may return to training, regardless of sport, until he/she is cleared by a health care professional with a note specifying clearance. Athletes should NEVER return to the pool if they still have ANY symptoms..... in case an athlete returns with a note and then during the practice complains of a headache or other symptoms
- Parents and coaches should never pressure any athlete to return to play

### **The Dangers of Returning Too Soon**

Returning to the pool too early may cause Second Impact Syndrome (SIS) or Post-Concussion Syndrome (PCS). SIS occurs when a second blow to the head happens before an athlete has completely recovered from a concussion. This second impact causes the brain to swell, possibly resulting in brain damage, paralysis, and even death. PCS can occur after a second impact. PCS can result in permanent, long-term concussion symptoms. The risk of SIS and PCS is the reason why no athlete should be allowed to participate in any physical activity before they are cleared by a qualified health care professional.

### **Recovery**

A concussion can affect school, work, and sports. Along with coaches and teachers, the school nurse, athletic trainer, employer, and other school administrators should be aware of the athlete's injury and their roles in helping the child recover. During the recovery time after a concussion, physical and mental rest is required. A concussion upsets the way the brain normally works and causes it to work longer and harder to complete even simple tasks. Activities that require concentration and focus may make symptoms worse and cause the brain to heal slower. Studies show that children's brains take several weeks to heal following a concussion.

### **Returning to Daily Activities**

1. Be sure your child gets plenty of rest and enough sleep at night – no late nights. Keep the same bedtime weekdays and weekends.
2. Encourage daytime naps or rest breaks when your child feels tired or worn-out.
3. Limit your child's activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration (including social activities, homework, video games, texting, computer, driving, job-related activities, movies, parties). These activities can slow the brain's recovery.
4. Limit your child's physical activity, especially those activities where another injury or blow to the head may occur.
5. Have your qualified health care professional check your child's symptoms at different times to help guide recovery.