

# Important Information & FAQs – Spring/Summer 2023

MSS is pleased to offer safe, high-quality instruction and competition experience to young swimmers.

Our club is grateful for the ongoing support from our MSS families and our partnership with the Angie O'Donnell Aquatic Center (AOAC) and the McFarland School District. The McFarland Spartan Sharks' Coaches and Board of Directors look forward to our Spring/Summer season and our summer home meet in June, along with the opportunity to participate in other local and regional swim meets.

Thank you for reading this information prior to registering your swimmer. This document is designed to offer transparency to our club operations and answer frequently asked questions about MSS programming.

## Registration, swim evaluations, payment processes and fees

**Q: When does online registration open, and how are current and returning swim families defined?**

**A:** Online registration will open for current and returning MSS families on **Sunday, February 12 at 9 a.m.** and will close on **Tuesday, February 14 at 8 p.m.** Current and returning families are defined as those families who swam with MSS between January 2022 – January 2023. Current and returning families may also register new sibling swimmers in this first wave of registration as long as your new swimmer has had a swim evaluation or specific group placement recommendation from one of our coaches. (See information regarding Swim Evaluations below.)

If spots remain in swim groups, MSS will reopen the registration portal for families new to MSS on **Thursday, February 16 at 9 am** and will close registration on **Saturday, February 28, 2023 at 8 p.m.**

**Q: How do swim evaluations work, and who needs a swim evaluation with MSS?**

**A:** MSS requires swim evaluations for swimmers who are new to the swim team experience and for swimmers who have not been on a swim team for an extended period of time.

Evaluations are conducted to ensure new swimmers are ready for the swim team experience. All swimmers who are new MSS (including swimmers considering transferring from other swim teams and siblings of current MSS swimmers) should consult with Coach Sara Landolt about the need for a swim evaluation. Evaluations are free, fun, take less than 15 minutes, and are held at the Angie O'Donnell Aquatic Center at McFarland High School. Please email Coach Sara at sklandolt@yahoo.com to schedule a swim evaluation.

**Check this sign-up for eval dates offered this month (February):**

Feb 6, 8, 13, 15, 20 & 22nd

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a054bafa72ba75-mssspringsummer#/>

**Q: Is MSS anticipating room for new families this session? How do MSS waitlists work?**

**A:** MSS is planning similar-sized swim groups as we've had in recent sessions. Although we cannot guarantee spots in any group, MSS has accommodated current and new families in the last year without significant waiting lists. If swim groups are full, families are strongly encouraged to register their swimmer to the waitlist and email mssreg@gmail.com with the name of their swimmer and preferred swim group.

**Q: What is included with the MSS registration? Do swimmers need to bring their own equipment?**

**A:** Registration includes an MSS swim cap and an MSS T-shirt. (Please note your swimmer's shirt size, specifying youth or adult, please, in the online registration process.) All swimmers will need to have goggles and a practice swimsuit. Swimmers can purchase a team suit from our online store during the season. Senior 13/14 and Senior 1 swimmers should talk with their coach about purchasing other equipment to bring to practice.

**Q: I understand that MSS Board members can register their swimmers ahead of the scheduled registration time. Is this true, and if so, please explain the rationale behind this practice?**

**A:** MSS Board members can register their swimmers early because MSS's board bylaws require that Board members are a family member of a current MSS swimmer. The early registration ensures that Board members meet this bylaw requirement. It is also how our club tests our registration system as we do not have a test site available. We also allow officials to register their swimmers early as a benefit of committing their time and resources to supporting our team as an official.

**Q: I see that registration is online and payment is required via credit card. How will credit card billing work? Is there any way I can pay by check instead?**

**A:** MSS is not able to process personal checks or receive cash. Our registration system, TeamUnify, requires credit card payment. By agreeing to the terms of registration, you are giving MSS permission to charge your credit card the registration fee and any other accrued fees throughout the season, including season fee installments and swim meet fees.

At registration, you are only paying a portion of your overall season fee. The balance is spread out over the season with payments on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month. Season fees and monthly payments are detailed on the payment information listed [under the Registration tab](#).

**Q: I understand that MSS is no longer processing the USA Swimming Athlete registration but that this registration is still required. How will this work? How do I know if my swimmer is USA Swimming registered?**

**A: Every** MSS swimmer must have a current USA Swimming Athlete membership. If you swam with MSS in Fall or Winter, your athlete membership will be current through both Spring and Summer and nothing else is needed.

If you are brand new to MSS for Spring or Summer, you will be required to register your athlete with USA Swimming prior to the first practice in April. This is a required step of your registration but takes place outside of MSS's registration portal. Once you have registered with MSS, you will receive additional instructions on how to register your athlete with USA Swimming and purchase a seasonal athlete membership.

**Q: How do refunds work?**

**A:** MSS will grant a refund for the current payment if a swimmer is injured or has a health-related (including mental health) reason that prevents them from completing the season.

**Q: Does MSS offer a multi-swimmer discount?**

**A:** MSS is pleased to offer a multi-swimmer discount for our member families. The swim fee discounts are applied as follows:

- 7.5% for 2 swimmers
- 10% for 3 swimmers
- 12.5% for 4 swimmers

## Swim groups

**Q: Are there specific practice days for the Travelers and Extreme 3-Day groups?**

**A:** 3-Day Traveler and Extreme swimmers may select the 3 days of the week they wish to attend practice.

**Q: How do I know if my swimmer should move up to the next swim group?**

**A:** Please check with your swimmer's coach if you have any questions about swim group placement for your swimmer. Coaches will do their best to communicate with both swimmers and parents about any recommended swim group changes prior to registration.

**Q: How can I find out who is coaching each swim group this session?**

**A:** Any questions about swim group coaches can be directed to Head Coach Nick Weiss at [nickwweiss@gmail.com](mailto:nickwweiss@gmail.com).

## **Practices**

**Q: Will MSS swimmers be able to use the locker rooms to change or will they be using the changing stalls?**

**A:** The AOAC allows swimmers in the locker rooms for short periods of time (generally 10 minutes or less). The changing stalls off the pool deck also are available to MSS swimmers. MSS and the AOAC request that locker room usage be minimized as much as possible. Swimmers are encouraged to arrive "swim ready" and depart the pool without using the locker rooms, if possible.

**Q: Can parents watch practice?**

**A:** Yes, parents are allowed to watch practice. Parents are asked to stay in the spectator area on deck and not wander around the building during practices.

**Q: Is MSS offering bus transportation from McFarland Conrad Elvehjem and Waubesa Intermediate School during the Spring season?**

**A:** MSS is again partnering with Nelson Bus Company to offer bus service for the Spring season for swimmers in our Kickers and Travelers swim groups. Bus fees are forthcoming. A bus sign-up will be emailed to Kicker and Traveler families the week after registration closes.

## **Competition**

**Q: Does MSS anticipate any competitive swim meets this Spring and Summer? What swim meet commitment is required for MSS swimmers?**

**A:** Meets are strongly encouraged but not required for MSS swimmers. The Spring and Summer meet schedule will be posted to MSS's website as soon as it is finalized. Save the date for our Summer Home Meet: June 24-25, 2023.

## Family service hour obligation

### **Q: What is MSS's Family Service Hour Obligation?**

**A:** MSS is a nonprofit swim club that relies on volunteers to execute our mission and offer a high-quality swim program for all swimmers. Although we need and appreciate volunteers in a variety of roles, we require a volunteer commitment for our home swim meets as follows:

- Each MSS family is required to work 8 hours during the meet. Job shifts may be either 2- or 4- hours in length. You can combine shifts, if available, to meet the total 8-hour obligation.
- Each 4-hour shift worked in a premium job role will be counted as 8 hours. Premium volunteer roles during a meet include Timer, Head Timer, Colorado Operator and Hytek Operator. (Training required for Colorado Operator.)

Families that absolutely cannot assist with a volunteer shift during a home meet can request to volunteer for another task to assist in preparing for the meet. Please contact Jason Kraemer, MSS's Volunteer Coordinator, at [Jason.kraemer2021@gmail.com](mailto:Jason.kraemer2021@gmail.com) if you know your family will have challenges meeting your volunteer commitment.

### **Q: Can my family make a donation to MSS in lieu of volunteering? Is there a penalty for not meeting the family service hour commitment per family at the home swim meet?**

**A:** MSS greatly appreciates donations to our club, but we are unable to take donations in lieu of a volunteer/family service hour commitment. Volunteers are essential to ensure a safe and fun swim meet experience for all participating swimmers. Please note that your service hour obligation can be fulfilled by another swim family, family members such as grandparent or a friend. Please communicate to the Volunteer Coordinator if you have others filling your job shifts on your behalf.

At present, there is no financial penalty for failing to meet the family service hour commitment, but the MSS board is revisiting this in the coming months. However, if your family's service hour obligation is not fulfilled, your family will not be considered in good standing with the club. This means that during the next MSS registration, your family will NOT be able to participate in priority registration as a current or returning MSS family. Your registration will be accepted with new families if spots are available within the swim group.

## Safe Sport and the Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy

**Q: What is Safe Sport? Will there be any other requirements of my swimmer or family throughout the swim season that have not been addressed elsewhere in this document?**

**A:** MSS is a Safe Sport Designated Club. All families must read and acknowledge the [Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy \(MAAPP\) training](#) as part of our registration process.

In addition, parents of athletes and minor athletes ages 12-17 are asked to complete the annual Safe Sport online training. Athletes aged 18 and older are **required** to complete [Safe Sport training](#). Information about Safe Sport and MSS's Minor Abuse Prevention Policy can be found under the Safe Sport tab on our website, and additional communication will come from our Safe Sport Coordinator, Natalie Hoyos, [msssafesport@gmail.com](mailto:msssafesport@gmail.com).

## **Meeting the coaches and other MSS activities**

**Q: Will there be an opportunity to meet the coaches before the first practice?**

**A:** If you are uncertain about who is coaching your swimmer's swim group and/or if your swimmer has any questions about the first day of practice, we encourage you to reach out to Head Coach Nick Weiss at [nickweiss@gmail.com](mailto:nickweiss@gmail.com).

**Q: Does MSS offer other team-building or social opportunities for swimmers or parents besides swim meet participation?**

**A:** MSS hosts an end-of-the-season awards gathering and pool party in late spring or just before the summer season begins. The club is also considering other events and activities for team-building experiences this season.