



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

## **YMCA SWIMMING PROGRAM GUIDELINES AND RESOURCES**

The following areas are not referenced in the Rules That Govern YMCA Sports, but are the YMCA of the USA standard of best practices for the operation of a YMCA competitive swimming or diving program.

### **Personnel**

Individuals who coach YMCA teams should be employees or volunteers of the YMCA, hired and supervised by a member of the YMCA staff, not a parents organization or an independent club. YMCAs should follow their current hiring and screening procedures when hiring or assigning coaches. This includes conducting in-depth interviews, researching a candidate's credentials and employment history, checking references and performing background screenings and drug tests as established by the YMCA's human resources officer or department.

Once hired, coaches are subject to either the personnel policies or volunteer policies of the YMCA. Head coaches should be treated as YMCA professionals and should be included in staff meetings, training and professional development opportunities. They should be held to the same standards and protocols as other program directors and they should be consulted on matters that affect the competitive swimming and diving program. Coaches should be encouraged to participate in both YMCA and sport-specific trainings in order to constantly improve their ability to develop the youth and children involved in the competitive swimming and diving program.

Because of their regular and direct contact with youth, all coaches and program volunteers should clear a background screening prior to employment or volunteer service. Once cleared, all coaches and program volunteers should complete a child abuse prevention/child protection training as designated by his/her YMCA. YMCA of the USA and USA Swimming both use and recommend online trainings provided through Praesidium. For more information, recommended trainings and preferred vendors for background screening, go to <https://yexchange.org/ProgramAdministration/Pages/Child-Abuse-Prevention.aspx>

It is important to maintain a cooperative relationship and regular communication between the YMCA leadership and the competitive swimming and diving leadership. All coaches and directors share responsibility in preserving a positive and supportive environment.

When attending meets at sites other than his/her own YMCA, the head coach is the official representative of that YMCA and is ultimately responsible for the conduct and behavior of the swimmers, coaches, parents, and spectators accompanying the team.

### **Parents' Organizations**

Some YMCA competitive swimming programs have a parents' organization, also known as a parents' committee, board or club. Participants in parents' organizations are program volunteers who assist YMCA staff in support of the competitive swimming and diving program. Parents' organizations are advisory bodies that are accountable to the YMCA staff

and should not operate as a policy making committee or board of directors. All policy decisions affecting the program should be made by the program director or head coach with the support of his/her direct YMCA supervisor and with consideration given to the input and suggestions of the parents organization. The hiring, evaluation and dismissal of coaches rests with the YMCA, not the parents' organization. Parents' organizations are not legally responsible and cannot make any decisions to bind or obligate the YMCA.

The following are the duties and responsibilities within the local YMCA structure:

Corporate Board: The legally responsible, governing body for the YMCA that sets broad policy for the entire YMCA, hires the executive director, controls/approves all local YMCA budgets, sets guiding philosophies for the YMCA, has all legal responsibility for the local YMCA and has ultimate control of all bank accounts, income, and expense, and conducts fund-raising.

Staff: Implements policies set by the Board, supports the day-to-day administration of the activities, oversees all finances and all bank accounts of the YMCA, proposes the budget to corporate boards, supports fund-raising efforts on behalf of the YMCA, makes programmatic plans and decisions, hires and supervises all staff and program volunteers, oversees fundraising efforts, to assure that they are consistent with the YMCA's fundraising policies.

Advisory Committee or Parents Group: Supports the programs of the local YMCA, highlights accomplishments of local YMCA programs as selected by corporate board and implemented by staff, raises funds as directed by YMCA staff or the Corporate Board and sees that all funds raised, from whatever source, are given to YMCA staff for deposit into YMCA corporate bank account.

All programs operated in the YMCA name or out of YMCA facilities must be under the supervision of YMCA staff and under the control of the Corporate Chartered Board of Directors for the local YMCA.

When parents' organizations exist, the following should be clearly defined: positions with descriptions of their specific duties, selection process, length of term, expectations, meeting schedule and purpose.

### **Financial Management and Advice on Control of Local YMCA Money and Programs**

It is critical for the YMCA's maintenance of its nonprofit status and for other tax purposes that all funds raised or used for YMCA programs are channeled through the YMCA accounting system and are under the direct control of YMCA staff and the Corporate Board. Only in this way can all funds collected and used for YMCA purposes be reported on IRS form 990, as required by federal law. It will also help to prevent the misuse or inappropriate use of the funds and the YMCA's federal tax exemption. It is illegal for organizations to have funds in outside accounts using the YMCA's tax ID number.

Funds earmarked as "custodial" accounts should become the property of the YMCA if a group disbands or leaves the sponsorship of the association. Additionally, any equipment purchased in the name of, or on behalf of, the YMCA or a YMCA program, is property of the YMCA.

Fund raising by competitive teams should be organized and conducted under the direct control of the YMCA to ensure that these efforts are consistent with the association's fund raising policies and do not interfere with other solicitations being made by the YMCA in the community. Funds that are raised "in the name of" or utilizing the name of the YMCA are legally YMCA funds. A careful understanding should be established with the groups affected concerning how they might access funds for approved use.

## **Insurance**

YMCAs should check with their insurance carriers to ensure that staff and volunteers involved in their competitive swimming programs are covered by liability insurance. Particular attention should be given to the coverage provided for away meets and meets not held within the YMCA facility. Consideration should also be given to coverage for those individuals (coaches, parents, swimmers) who provide transportation for swimmers to and from away meets. All coaches and volunteers should be provided with an orientation to the local YMCA's child abuse prevention policies.

## **YMCA Branding**

All YMCAs are to be in alignment with the YMCA of the USA brand standards as of December 31, 2015. This applies to all apparel, banners and printed materials. Information on branding can be found on the [Exchange](#) or [Brand Resource Center](#). For additional questions please contact your YMCA's Brand Advocate.

## **Resources**

The resources listed below are to assist YMCAs with the administration of their competitive swimming and diving programs. These may be found on the YMCA of Competitive Swimming and Diving website, [www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org](http://www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org), YMCA Exchange website ([www.yexchange.org](http://www.yexchange.org)), or in manuals available through the YMCA Program Store (1-800-747-0089).

### [YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving Website](#)

- The Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports
- Swimming Addendum to the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports
- YMCA National Swimming and Diving Championship Meet Information
- Coaches Safety Requirements
- List of YMCA Swimming and Diving Regional Representatives and Officials Coordinators
- Sanction Rules for YMCA Championship and Invitational Meets
- YMCA Meet FAQs

### [Y Exchange](#)

- YMCA Child Abuse Prevention Guidelines
- Aquatics Safety Guidelines for Ys
- Competitive Swimming Guide for Aquatic Directors
- Principles of YMCA Swimming and Diving e-learning – available through the LCDC

### [YMCA Program Store](#)

- YMCA of Aquatic Management: A Guide to Effective Leadership
- On the Guard: The YMCA Lifeguard Manual (5<sup>th</sup> edition)

The following training courses are available for YMCA swimming coaches and officials:

- Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving (e-learning)
- Swim Officials Level I
- Swim Officials Level II
- Administrative Official
- Swim Officials Trainer