



HANDBOOK

Policies and Procedures

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Mission

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Association strives to provide the opportunity to all swimmers to “Be the Best They Can Be” and to reach their highest level of achievement through hard work, discipline, support, encouragement and team spirit.

Team Philosophy

“Developing citizens and athletes”

Vision

The vision of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team is to create a supportive team atmosphere in which individuals are expected and encouraged to pursue personal excellence in character and in the competitive sport of swimming. To attain this vision, the team believes in the following objectives:

1. Assisting athletes with learning and developing skills for positive interaction, teamwork, and personal character;
2. Creating and facilitating a supportive team atmosphere in which individuals are encouraged and expected to pursue excellence in both character and the competitive sport of swimming;
3. Implementing developmentally appropriate athlete development strategies for seasonal and long-term success;
4. Promoting and facilitating the sport of competitive swimming;
5. Giving every swimmer the opportunity to be the best that s/he can be.

Core Values

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Association has identified the following core values that inform and shape the team’s character, strategy, behaviours, and decisions:

1. **Community:** As a rural, small-community group of swimmers with a variety of interests and personal goals, team and individual success is recognized through many measures, which include, but are not limited to or prioritized according to ribbons, medals, or competitive potential. Successful outcomes include development in personal discipline, team support and unity, personal progress in skill and speed, character development, improved health and fitness, responsibility, and community service.
2. **Equal opportunity:** Recognizing the community principle of our team, the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Association strives to provide equal opportunity for swimmers to reach their individual potential. All athletes should receive relatively equal opportunity and feedback for skill development in training sessions over the course of the season, notwithstanding that individual athletes may choose to pursue additional training opportunities that may arise.

3. **Mutual respect:** Every team member, as well as parents, coaches, and executive committee members deserves to be treated with consideration and respect. By treating all members of our community with respect and recognition of worth, we can be successful in our shared pursuit of team goals.
4. **Pursuit of excellence:** Regardless of age, ability, or potential, each member of the team strives to do his or her best and to reach his or her own personal goals. It is the responsibility of each team member to contribute positively by striving for personal excellence, and where applicable, to foster and encourage excellence in his or her teammates.
5. **Responsibility:** All athletes, parents, officials, and coaches are expected to take responsibility for their actions and decisions when they are engaged with or representing the Team. Where actions are deemed to be contrary to the values and expectations for appropriate swim Team conduct, swimmers may be subject to discipline, according to the principles and procedures outlined in the Team's Discipline Policy.
6. **Developmental appropriateness:** The activities and training strategies should reflect Swimming/Natation Canada's Long Term Athlete Development model, recognizing that different strategies and priorities are appropriate at different developmental levels.
7. **Commitment:** Commitment is necessary for success. There are a number of options and many acceptable goals within the Team, so families must make their choices and then follow through with a high level of commitment.

Swim Schedule

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team is affiliated annually with Swim Alberta and Swim Canada/Natation Canada as a year round swim Team. The pool that the Athabasca Swim Team swimmers train in is the Athabasca Landing Pool.

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team's swimming schedule will be set at the beginning of each swim season and generally commences in late September or early October of each year after the annual closure and maintenance of the Athabasca Landing Pool is completed. The swim season typically ends at the end of June. Additional costs may be negotiated by the Team Executive with swim families for additional opportunities such as, but not limited to, training for Provincial Summer Championships and the Alberta Summer Games.

Generally, the training season consists of

- Competitive swim training
- Intermediate swim training
- Junior Developmental swim training

Additional swim programs may be available at the discretion of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Association (ARSTA) Executive dependent on swimmer interest and coaching and pool resources.

Dates, or situations that swimming generally does not occur on include, but are not limited to

- Statutory holidays and school holiday breaks, such as Christmas, Fall, Spring, and Easter Breaks.
- Inclement weather days as issued by the local AspenView Education Division.

Swim Team Fees

Swim fees will be set prior to the beginning of each new swim year. These swim fees include a mandatory registration fee with Swim Alberta/Swim Canada and team training fees. Team training fees are used to rent pool lanes, to pay the coach for training sessions, for team equipment, and to pay coaching costs for swim meets.

Swimmers will be registered with Swim Alberta and Swim Canada at the beginning of the swim season. The registration portion of the swim fees are forwarded to Swim Alberta and are non-refundable. The team training fee portion of the registration fee may be pro-rated for swimmers who withdraw from the swim program or who join the swim Team after the season has commenced. Fee adjustments (i.e., refunds or pro-rating of fees) will be at the discretion of the ARSTA Executive.

Athabasca Swim Team fees can either be paid as a lump sum at the beginning of the swim season (upon registration), or in increments throughout the swim season as outlined in the registration materials.

In addition to Swim Fees, swim families will be required to submit fundraising and volunteer participation cheques at the time of swimmer registration. Cheques will be required for a maximum of two swimmers in any one swim family. For families with more than two registered swimmers, the fundraising requirements will be that of the two swimmers registered in the most advanced programs. Cheques will be returned to each swim family upon satisfactory completion of participation and/or minimum fundraising levels identified for the scheduled fundraising events.

Swim fees and fundraising / volunteer cheque amounts are outlined on the swimmer registration forms at the beginning of each swim season.

Swim Meet Fees

Registered swimmers will be eligible to participate in swim meets throughout the swim season. The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team strives to offer approximately eight competitive opportunities per year (approximately one per month). Participation in swim meets for competitively registered swimmers is optional (but encouraged) and is at the discretion of individual families from meet to meet. The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Registrar will invite swimmers to participate in swim meets throughout the swim season. Swim meet costs **are in addition** to the swim meet fees for registration and team training fees, and are payable to the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team via the ARSTA Treasurer upon registration. Fees

will vary depending on the swim meet and number of races that are entered. In general, swim meet fees are approximately \$45-\$80 per meet. To off-set the costs of swim meets, a meet user fee will be assessed for each swimmer who is registering in the meet. This meet fee will be set at the beginning of the swim year by the ARSTA Executive and will be communicated with annual swimmer registration.

Swim meet fees are non-refundable if swimmers withdraw from the meet after the meet scratch deadline occurs.

Swimmers who are registered as non-competitive swimmers with the ARSTA may participate in one meet during the swim season from September 1 – June 30. For entry-level, developing swimmers, swim meet readiness will be assessed in consultation with Athabasca Rapids Swim Team coaches. These swimmers may participate in the “My First Race Series” as hosted by the ARSTA at the Athabasca Landing Pool during regular training sessions.

Fundraising and Volunteer Requirements

Swim families will be expected to participate in fundraisers and volunteer events throughout the swim season. The monies raised through this participation are integral to the operation of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Association and supplement the Swim Team Fees to meet operating expenses and keep program costs achievable for swim families.

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team will host a variety of fundraisers through the swim season. Swimmers and/or their families are required to meet the fundraising goals specified either through participation in the fundraisers, or through equivalent payment as outlined on initial registration documents.

Past fundraising events/options have included:

- Sweets and Meats sales – This fundraiser has included sales of chocolates and meats from selected vendors.
- Swim-a-thon – This is a mandatory event, and all swimmers registered with Swim Alberta must participate.
- Service opportunities –Fundraisers that may occur include participation in a road-side clean up in spring, Athabasca Convocation, or hosting a movie at the Athabasca Multiplex.
- Cash Raffle ticket sales – Members and swim families staff ticket sales booths at local businesses.
- Counting laps or doing errands during the annual swim-a-thon fundraising event.
- Volunteering on behalf of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team for swim meet tasks such as timing and stroke turn judging. Training sessions are available during the swim year if members are interested in this opportunity to support the Team and learn more about the sport of swimming.

Fundraisers and volunteer opportunities to achieve registration requirements will be communicated throughout the swim season by the ARSTA Fundraising Chair. Fundraising activities and volunteer opportunities will vary dependent on the year and will be managed in a manner that will meet the best interests and financial needs of the needs of the swim team.

Swim Equipment

Swimmers will need some basic swim equipment to participate in swim practice sessions. The recommended swim equipment for practice sessions includes

- Swim suit
- Swim towel
- Swim cap (a backup cap is recommended)
- Swim goggles
- Labelled water bottle
- Training snorkel
- Flippers

Preparing for Swim Meets

Swimmers have the opportunity to participate in swim meets throughout the swim season. The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team attempts to offer opportunities for swimmers participate in about one meet per month.

Participation in swim meets is optional. An invitation to participate in swim meets will be sent via email to swim families by the Registrar. Swim families will be given a deadline to respond to the Registrar so the entries can be completed in a timely manner. The Registrar will forward a list of participants to the Head Coach who will register swimmers in appropriate events. Costs for swim meets are in addition to the registration and Team fees and are payable to the Team Treasurer.

During a swim meet, swimmers will compete against other swimmers of a similar skill level. Swimmers attempt to better their swim times in their different swimming events. Between swim meets the coach will work with each swimmer to improve swim techniques. In training, improvement of stroke technique may receive greater emphasis than swimming speed.

Techniques that may be worked on include

- Stroke elements for freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly
- Starts
- Turns
- Finishing wall touches

Swim meets attended during the winter swim season may include

- Short course swim meets (November – April) –25 metre pool

- Long course swim meets (April – June) –50 metre pool

The recommended swim equipment for a swim meet includes

- Swim suit
- Swim cap (custom caps may be available from the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team)
- A minimum of two towels
- Two pairs of goggles
- Indoor or deck shoes
- Outer clothing such as track or sweat pants/suit/housecoat to wear between events
- Labelled water bottle
- Nutritional snacks
- Books, games, cards for swimmers to play between swimming events

Swimmers must inform the swim coach of their whereabouts if they leave the deck during practices or during swim meets.

Swimmers are responsible for deck tidiness and looking after their own belongings at swim meets and during practices.

Measures of Swimmer Achievement

Swimmer achievement is measured in a variety of ways, but primarily through formal competitions (sanctioned swim meets).

Each swimmer's progress is measured and celebrated through the ongoing recording of **Personal Best Times** in various competition events. Personal best times give each swimmer a benchmark for improvement.

Achievement relative to one's peer group (relative to age) is measured in several ways:

- **Meet placing** (e.g., 1st, 2nd, third) in age groups at swim meets
- **Swim Alberta Provincial Standards** – These times are posted as a benchmark for age group swimmers, signaling that provincial qualifying times may be achievable. These times can be valuable for goal-setting. Provincial Standards are established annually for each age group in a full range of events, and are posted at the Swim Alberta Website. There are different Provincial Standards for both short course (Northern Alberta Provincials - Spring) and long course (Northern Alberta Provincials -Summer) swim meets.
- **Swim Alberta Championship Standards** – These times are established annually for age group swimmers in a full range of events, and are posted at the Swim Alberta Website. Swimmers who achieve a Championship Standard qualify to swim one plus two races at the Alberta Championship Swim Meet. Each additional Championship Standard that is met qualifies the swimmer one additional race. There are both Alberta Spring Championship (following the Swim

Alberta short course season) and Alberta Summer Championship (following the Swim Alberta long course season) meets.

Potential exists for swimmers to compete at open/invitation meets (all), provincial meets (with Swim Alberta Provincial Standard times), championship meets (with Swim Alberta Championship Standards), Westerns, and Nationals. Reaching the provincial level of competition is a significant accomplishment.

Northern Alberta Provincials, Provincial Championships, and Other Qualifying Meets

The ARSTA is committed to assisting swimmers of many abilities to reach their personal swimming goals.

Swimmers who do achieve the required qualifying times, and who are able to attend Northern Alberta Provincials and/or Provincial Championships, may be supported by the ARSTA up to \$200/ qualified swimmer toward the cost of the Northern Alberta Provincials, or Provincial Championship meet. In the event that multiple swimmers qualify, \$200/ qualifying swimmer who attends the meet, to the total cost of the swim meet may be covered by the ARSTA.

Swim families of qualified swimmers who attend Northern Alberta Provincials, Alberta Championships, and other qualifying meets including Westerns and National meets may be expected to contribute payment toward the cost of the associated meet expenses.

Discipline Policy and Process

ARSTA coaches have the freedom to and are expected to reinforce behaviour expectations. The disciplinary action that is taken will be based on the seriousness of the offense and the behavioural history of the team member in question. Discipline for repeated behavioural infractions will normally be progressive, following the stages below. Given the nature of an infraction and/or the seriousness of the infraction, some infractions may warrant a more intense or comprehensive intervention than others.

While it is anticipated that this policy will be invoked only rarely, the purpose of documenting this policy is to clarify expectations and procedures in the event that a swimmer's behaviour warrants progressive disciplinary action. The purpose of this policy is as follows:

- to outline a predictable sequence that swimmers and parents can predict and respond to;
- to allow for documentation of discipline, if needed;
- to provide coaches with a consistent process supported by the ARSTA Executive;
- to assure coaches of proactive Executive support for disciplinary action, and;
- to help protect swimmers from inequitable or arbitrary disciplinary treatment.

Principles

1. Swimmers are expected to treat other swimmers, coaches, parents, volunteers, pool staff, and officials with respect.
2. The responsibility for correcting or improving errant behaviour lies first and foremost with the swimmer, but failing that, the swimmer's parent or guardian will be enlisted to help correct the swimmer's behaviour. If, however, the parent or guardian is unwilling or unable to correct the swimmer's behaviour, the Team reserves the right to act in a manner that protects the interests and well-being of the Team and the other swimmers, coaches, and parents.
3. Time and instruction in the pool is a privilege, not a right. While swim families pay fees for participation in the swim Team and swim meets, behaviour that endangers safety, interferes with the other swimmers' ability to participate effectively, interferes with the coach's ability to coach, or otherwise disrupts the program, may result in a swimmer being removed from the pool.
4. The coach's primary role should be coaching, not discipline. However, given that the coaches typically direct the swimmers' activities, coaches are a natural first point of contact for many disciplinary matters.
5. Where a disciplinary response from a coach is necessary, that response should be carried out in a reasonable and equitable manner.
6. The degree of discipline should be consistent with the severity of the behaviour. This implies that repetitive unacceptable behaviour may be subject to increasing levels of discipline if not corrected. This also implies that particularly egregious behaviour may be subject to severe disciplinary measures the first time it occurs.

Expectations and Responsibilities

Swimmers

1. Swimmers should expect to be treated with respect and fairness by other swimmers, coaches, officials, parents, pool staff, and Executive Committee members.
2. Swimmers have the responsibility to moderate their own behaviour and to treat others with respect and fairness.

Coaches

1. Coaches should be able to expect swimmers to follow their instructions.
2. Coaches should be able to use reasonable discretion in disciplining swimmers during practice sessions, swim meets, and team functions.
3. Coaches should be able to expect support in their decisions from parents and executive committee members.
4. Coaches are responsible for treating all swimmers with respect, equity, and fairness.
5. Coaches are responsible to organize and structure practices for the benefit of the swimmers present.
6. Coaches are responsible for dealing directly and forthrightly with disciplinary matters during practice sessions.

7. Coaches are responsible for communicating and collaborating with parents and, if necessary, Team Executive regarding disruptive or problem behaviour.

Parents

1. Parents should be able to expect their swimmers to receive fair and equitable treatment from coaches.
2. Parents should be able to expect that practice sessions are organized and beneficial to the swimmers.
3. Parents are responsible for recognizing and respecting the authoritative role of the coaches during practice sessions, and expected to discuss any Team-related disciplinary concerns raised by a coach in a constructive matter.
4. Parents are responsible to facilitate the correction of unacceptable behaviour of their swimmer if the swimmer is incapable of making the correction independently.
5. Parents are responsible to monitor the behaviour of their swimmers in team-related activities outside of practice sessions (e.g., in change rooms, off deck during swim meets, etc.).

The Team and Its Executive Members

1. The team Executive is expected to institute, amend, and enforce this discipline policy.
2. The team Executive may form a Disciplinary Committee comprised of Executive members to act on behalf of the Executive.
3. The team Executive is responsible for maintaining the good standing of the team with swimmers, parents, coaches, and the local community.
4. The team Executive, or its designated Disciplinary Committee is responsible for dealing with any unresolved disciplinary concerns raised by coaches or parents in a fair, equitable, and timely manner.
5. The team Executive, or its designated Disciplinary Committee is responsible to intervene in disciplinary matters when it is evident that coaches or parents are unwilling or incapable of dealing with the unruly or disruptive behaviour of a swimmer.
6. The team Executive, or its designated Disciplinary Committee is responsible to intervene in disciplinary matters when it is evident that a parent or coach is approaching a disciplinary situation in a way that contravenes the established guidelines.

Stages of the Disciplinary Process

Stage 1 – Swimmer / Coach

This stage would be used for most situations that might typically be encountered during practice sessions.

Guidelines for Stage 1

- The coach deals directly with the swimmer.
- The coach has the discretion to stop the disruption using reasonable means such as segregating swimmers, having a swimmer sit out of the practice session for a time, cleaning duty, etc.

- The onus is on the swimmer to correct the behaviour.

Stage 2 – Swimmer / Coach / Parent

This stage may be invoked following the first instance of a more serious behaviour, or in cases where the swimmer has failed to correct their disruptive behaviour after repeated warnings and past interventions by coaches (repeated Stage 1). Alternatively, it may be invoked after similar (repeated) experiences reported to a member of the Team Executive (or designate) by a coach, pool staff, parent, or other swimmers.

Guidelines for Stage 2

- If, during a practice, the coach must intervene to stop the disruption (as per Stage 1), the coach will discuss the problem behaviour with the parent / guardian and explain the circumstances to date.
- After discussing the matter with the parent, the coach should notify a member of the Team Executive (ideally the designated parent-coach liaison) about the situation, for information only. The coach is also responsible to document the discussion (i.e., who, what, when).
- For incidents outside of practice sessions, the discussion with the parent / guardian may be initiated by a member of the Team Executive or designate, who would also have the responsibility to document the interaction.
- The swimmer would not be permitted to participate in further practice sessions until the discussion with parent / guardian had taken place. If either the coach or the parent / guardian wishes a member of the Team Executive to be present for the discussion, s/he may do so by request.
- The onus is on the parent to deal with / facilitate correction of the behaviour of the swimmer.

Stage 3 – Swimmer / Coach / Parent / Team Executive

This stage is reserved for serious breaches of conduct, which may include

- repeated occurrences of Stage 2 (i.e., parents have been notified and discussions have been held and documented, yet behaviours persist);
- an egregious, willful incident that jeopardizes health, safety, or well-being of others, demonstrates wanton disregard for others, or potentially affects the Team as a whole;
- incidents that require invoking regional or provincial policies.

Guidelines for Stage 3

- This stage is driven by members of the Team Executive committee, with input from parents and coaches.
- Team Executive members have an obligation to identify the facts and circumstances surrounding the incident prior to making decisions regarding disciplinary measures.
- Disciplinary consequences will be determined by at least two Team Executive members.

- The onus is on the Team Executive to investigate the incident and make decisions that consider the best interests of the parties involved, as well as other swimmers, coaches, parents, and the Team as a whole.

Expectations for Progressive Discipline

As outlined by this policy, discipline for unacceptable behaviour is expected to follow a progression that may include one or more of the following, or otherwise equivalent outcomes:

1. The swimmer is given verbal instruction or a verbal reprimand by the coach.
2. The swimmer may be instructed to sit out for a portion of a regular training session, followed by a coach/athlete meeting.
3. Following a coach/parent meeting, a swimmer may be suspended from one or more regular training sessions or a swim meet.
4. Coach/Executive/parent meeting to determine a plan for correction of behaviour, or if necessary, a disciplinary decision outcome.
5. The swimmer may be suspended from Team activities for a predetermined period.*
6. The swimmer may be suspended from all Team activities.*

* Suspensions should normally be communicated to the Team member in writing by the ARSTA Executive. Should an indefinite suspension be invoked, registration fees will not be refunded.

Appeals

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team is committed to providing an environment in which all members are treated with respect. As such, it is only fair to provide Athabasca Rapids Swim Team members a mechanism to appeal decisions that may appear to represent unfair treatment or treatment that is inconsistent with ARSTA Disciplinary Policy and Process, as outlined in the ARSTA Handbook. The purpose of this Appeals Policy is to ensure that appeals within the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team are dealt with in a fair and timely manner.

Grounds to appeal a decision may include one or more of the following elements:

- A decision made by one who did not have the authority or jurisdiction to do so
- Failure to follow policy or procedures outlined in the Bylaws or Handbook of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team
- A decision that was made with bias, lack of neutrality, or absence of documented evidence
- A decision that was grossly unreasonable

A member of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team who wishes to appeal a disciplinary decision will have fourteen (14) days from the time of the notice of the decision to submit a written appeal to the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Executive. The appeal should include the following:

- Statement of appeal
- Grounds for the appeal
- Conflict of interest considerations (if applicable)
- Requested remedies

A panel consisting of two members of the Team Executive will be assigned within seven (7) days of receipt of an appeal to review the request for an appeal, collect information, and assess the validity of the appeal. If the Team Executive itself is implicated in the grounds for the appeal, two alternative ARSTA members may be assigned to collect information and make a recommendation to the Team Executive to remedy the appeal. This process should normally be completed within 14 days, and the outcome communicated to the swim Team member or member's family (the parties involved) in writing by the Team Executive. The panel may choose to uphold the original action or sanction that was imposed, if deemed appropriate and legitimate under the Discipline Policy and Procedures, or the panel may recommend an alternative course of action.

The appeal process is confidential, involving only the parties involved and the panel required to seek resolution for such appeal.

The recommendation of the panel will be binding on the parties and on all Athabasca Rapids Swim Team members.

Staff/Coach Hiring and Screening Policy

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Executive or designated committee will be responsible for coach selection if/as required to ensure that suitable applicants meet the criteria set out in the coaching job description. If a Head Coach has already been selected for the team, the Head Coach will be consulted by the ARSTA Executive on any decisions regarding the hire of Assistant Coaching staff.

To ensure that all swimmers benefit from a safe and healthy environment, all adults who are working directly with the swimmers in a position of responsibility will be required to produce a Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector Verification to the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Registrar for review. Any verification documents that are required will be placed in the possession of the Secretary for safekeeping thereafter. Positions that require such a check will include those of Head Coach, any Assistant Coaches, and the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Executive members who act as the Board of Directors under Swim Alberta legislation.

Coaching and executive staff who maintain continuous employment with the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team are required to present a fresh Police Information Check submission for review every three years.

An annual Swim Alberta Screening Form will be required for review when Police Information Checks are not required. This is required as part of the Swim Alberta Coach Registry and is part of the annual affiliation requirements to keep swim clubs and teams in good standing with Swim Alberta. If a coach fails to produce such documentation, the ARSTA will remove the coach from the coaching roster to prevent the ARSTA from being suspended by Swim Alberta.

Upon presentation of the Police Information Check, the Team Registrar will

- record the date that the Police Information check was reviewed, and
- note any relevant offences in accordance with the Swim Alberta Screening Policy

The Police Information Check, and Swim Alberta Screening Form will not be retained by the Registrar. Coaches and Staff may retain their original copy of their Police Information Check. The Police Information Check of the Registrar will be reviewed by a designated member of the Executive Committee/Board of Directors.

Failure to participate in the screening process as outlined in this policy will result in ineligibility of the individual for a coaching or staff position with the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team.

Volunteer Screening and Recruitment Policy

Parents are encouraged to be involved with the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team through participation in the required fundraising activities that the swim Team hosts. Routine volunteers for these activities are not required to produce a Police Information Check.

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Executive Committee elections are held at the Annual General Meeting. Any vacant positions may be filled at a Special Meeting of the general membership. Any new Executive members will be screened in accordance with the Staff/Coaching Hiring and Screening Policy in this handbook.

Hazing Policy

All swim Team participants including swimmers, coaches, and volunteers have a right to a safe environment in which to participate and work in. It is the position of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team that any acts of hazing of members is strictly prohibited. This position is in accordance with policies outlined by Swim Alberta.

For more information on what Hazing constitutes, and the position held by Swim Alberta please visit: http://www.swimalberta.ca/images/stories/documents/policies/hazing_policy.pdf

Conflict of Interest Policy

Individuals who act on behalf of the ARSTA organization have a duty to that organization. Board Members/Executive must not put themselves in positions where making decisions of behalf of the organization is connected to their own personal interests (becoming or being a stakeholder).

With this in mind, in any conflict of interest, real or perceived, the interests of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team shall be favoured.

Board Members / Executive shall abide by the following guiding principles:

- Avoid individual/personal preferences in making decisions;
- Garner no personal benefit during the course of fulfilling one's Executive duties;
- Use ARSTA property or influence only for the performance of Team-related duties unless prior permission has been granted;
- Avoid placing themselves in positions in which they could influence decisions that would garner direct or indirect benefit.

Stakeholders shall disclose any potential conflicts of interest to the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Executive, particularly in situations where a member has been nominated for or appointed to an ARSTA committee.

In a situation where a conflict of interest is recognized, the following shall occur:

- The conflict shall be fully disclosed and documented/noted;
- The stakeholder shall refrain from discussion on the matter;
- The stakeholder shall abstain from voting on the decision;
- For board decisions, the stakeholder does not count toward quorum;
- Any related decisions shall be reviewed to ensure that they are in the best interests of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team.

Confidentiality Policy

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team is dedicated to ensuring that all swimmer information is handled in a secure and confidential manner in accordance with the laws and regulations outlined by FOIP. Only parties who are required to collect and store swimmer information shall have access to such information.

Any discipline, complaints, and appeals that occur will be handled in a confidential manner by those involved/appointed.

Code of Conduct and Ethics – Swimmers

Preamble

Upon registration, parents and swimmers will be required to sign the ARSTA Swimmer Code of Conduct, acknowledging their understanding of the document.

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team strives to create a supportive team atmosphere in which individuals are expected and encouraged to pursue personal excellence in character and in the sport of swimming.

The Team promotes the well-being, safety, and respect of all athletes, parents, and coaches involved in the sport. The ARSTA Swimmer Code of Conduct will promote an environment in which all swimmers can pursue their goals and develop personal discipline and positive team relationships. Also, it will ensure that our training and travel together remains enjoyable and safe for all members of the team.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct applies to all ARSTA swimmers who represent the Team at practices, training camps, team functions, and swim meets, including travel, hotel stays, and billeting.

Swimmers will be expected to conduct themselves in a manner that respects their fellow athletes, coaches, chaperones, officials, and pool staff. Furthermore, swimmers are expected to behave in a manner that reflects favourably on themselves, their families, the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team, and the sport of swimming.

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team expects the following behaviours of its athletes. These guidelines apply to practices, meets, training camps, and all team functions.

1. Respect and cooperate with coaches, volunteers, officials, pool staff, and chaperones at all times.
2. Treat your teammates with dignity and respect. You are part of a team.
 - Support and encourage your teammates.
 - Practice proper training etiquette as specified by coaches.
 - Practice good manners.
 - Respect your teammates' personal space.
 - Respect your teammates' personal belongings.
 - Refrain from criticizing teammates.
3. Treat all team equipment with care.
4. Use training time effectively, according to the coach's instructions.
5. Show courtesy and respect to your competitors.
6. Be punctual for practices, warm-ups, meets, and Team meetings.
7. Refrain from using profanity and foul language.
8. At competitions, inform coaches of your whereabouts (if you need to leave the pool deck, let the coach know), proceed to the marshalling area prior to races as instructed by coaches, and hang out with the team in the assigned area to share in team support. As a general guideline, coaches will deal with the swimming and on-deck aspects of a swim meet, while chaperones/parents will address aspects related to food, travel, accommodations, and Team administration.
9. Follow the rules and guidelines set out by the coaches, chaperones, pool staff, officials, and ARSTA Executive Committee.

Examples of inappropriate behaviour include the following:

- Use of disrespectful language, including name calling, profanity, and intentionally hurtful remarks (verbal abuse)
- Actions that threaten the safety of self and others, including attempts to assault or injure another person (physical abuse)
- Failure to comply with stated rules as set out by the coaches, pool staff, executive committee, and chaperones.
- Causing damage to property (abuse of property)
- Use of tobacco, alcohol, non-prescription (i.e., illegal) drugs or substances
- Any behaviour that violates a criminal code
- Sexual impropriety

Violations of the above Code of Conduct will be dealt with in a timely fashion by a coach or a chaperone (as applicable), and in collaboration with the parent and/or ARSTA Executive Committee IF/AS NEEDED, according to the guidelines presented in the ARSTA Swimmer Discipline Policy and Procedures.

Code of Conduct and Ethics – Coaches

In addition to fulfilling the coaching job description, the coach will have additional responsibilities. In accordance with the policies and procedures outlined by Swim Alberta and the Canadian Coaches and Teachers Association, the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team coaches will maintain the following understanding:

The athlete coach relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal as well as athletic development of their athletes. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it.

Any coaches associated with the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team are expected to

- Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of athletes, including educating athletes about their responsibilities in contributing to a safe environment;
- Avoid compromising the present and future health of athletes by refraining from using training methods or techniques that may harm athletes, by communicating and cooperating with medical professionals in diagnosing injuries, and by treating and managing athletes' medical and psychological problems (to the degree of the coach's training/knowledge);
- Provide an environment free of drugs or performance-enhancing substances, and promotion of same;
- Recognize athletes' individual swimming goals;

- Refrain from any intimate or sexual relations with an athlete under the age of 18 years and at no time engage in intimate or sexual relations with an athlete over the age of 18 if the coach is in a position of power, trust, or authority over the athlete;
- Provide athletes and the parents/guardians of athletes who are minors with the information necessary to be involved in the decisions that affect the athlete (as appropriate);
- Refrain from intervening inappropriately in personal affairs that are outside the generally accepted jurisdiction of a coach;
- Act in the best interest of the athlete as a whole person;
- Recognize the power inherent in the position of coach and respect and promote the rights of all participants in sport. This is accomplished by establishing and following procedures for confidentiality (right to privacy), informed participation, and fair, equitable, and reasonable treatment. Coaches have a special responsibility to respect and promote the rights of participants who are in a vulnerable or dependent position and less able to protect their own rights.

Code of Conduct and Ethics – Parents

The following are the expectations for parents of swimmers who are registered with the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team. It is expected that parents will

- Support their child/children, coaches, and team.
- Encourage their child's full participation at practice, swim meets, and Team activities.
- Participate in the required fundraising activities.
- Discuss their child's progress with coaches before or after practice, not on deck.
- Allow coaches to establish and implement the season's program. It may take several weeks to fully implement a program. For a successful season, this requires full trust and support from swimmers, parents, and the Team Executive.
- Discuss any concerns about the program with the Team President or alternate who will set up necessary meetings to address the problem.
- Submit complaints / concerns regarding coaching, Team operations, or facilities in writing to the Executive so that they can be formally addressed and followed up. See the Appeals Policy.
- Ensure that their child notifies the coach of his/her whereabouts at swim meets.
- Organize the transportation of swimmers to and from practices and meets.

Dispute Resolution

The Athabasca Rapids Swim Team supports the principles of dispute resolution and is committed to the techniques of negotiation, facilitation, mediation, and arbitration as effective ways to resolve disputes among members.

In the case of conflict between Athabasca Rapids Swim Team members, the individuals involved in the dispute must make every effort to resolve the conflict amongst themselves.

If a dispute arises stemming from the Discipline Policy and Procedures, a breach of Ethics, or a real or perceived conflict of interest, the appropriate processes as outlined by the Athabasca Rapids Appeals may be implemented. Where the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team processes fall short, the processes from Swim Alberta will be implemented.

Head Coach – Job Description

The head coach will lead and develop each swimmer in an age-appropriate manner. It is the responsibility of the head coach to do the following:

- Provide a draft training program outline and coaching philosophy statement before the commencement of the season for Executive approval. This will be followed up by regular updates to the Swim Team Executive.
- Arrange for a substitute coach when unable to fulfill a coaching commitment.
- Communicate with the Executive any concerns or difficulties as they arise.
- Attend and coach at swim meets or assign a designate. In such case as assistance is required at a swim meet, the Head Coach will select an appropriate Assistant Coach to accompany the Head Coach on deck.
- Set up procedures for swim meet entries, and communicate the process with swimmers and their parents. Prepare and submit all meet registration requests before deadlines.
- Direct and discipline swimmers during practices and swim meets. Policies and Procedures have been set in the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Handbook so that swimmers, parents, and coaches should be aware of the expectations. Coaches are responsible for all swimmers during scheduled practices and on deck at swim meets.
- Mentor and develop assistant coaches within the program.
- The Head Coach will develop and plan a training program for all registered swimmer groups and ensure the assistant coaches (if/as applicable) understand such plan in order to deliver the program.
- Provide a report and evaluation to the Executive at the end of the season.

- Encourage full participation of all swimmers at practices and meets. This includes having the authority to do lane assignments to meet the intended outcome of skill development, technique enhancement, or management of swimmer behaviours to enhance engagement.
- Undergo a Police Information Check with Vulnerable Sector Verification, and provide a copy to the Executive.
- Maintain certification with the Canadian Swim Coaches and Teachers Association.
- Acquire a minimum NCCP Level 1 – Fundamentals Coach Certificate.
- Follow the directives of the Team Executive and Handbook.

Assistant Coach – Job Description

The Assistant Coach(es) for the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team shall:

- Coach and assist with coaching under the direction of the Head Coach.
- Provide leadership, instruction, and motivation for assigned swimmers during training as directed by the head coach.
- Cultivate healthy swimmer relationships and create a collaborative team environment.
- Assist in maintaining a safe environment for swim team participants.
- Fill in for the head coach at practice sessions and /or swim meets as needed.
- Assist the head coach in delivering age-appropriate workouts focusing on technique, endurance, stroke development, and drills .
- Complete a Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Screening.

Board of Directors/Executive Committee

The Board of Directors/Executive Committee shall be established on an annual basis in accordance with the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Association Bylaws.

It is expected that the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team Board of Directors/Executive Committee will

- Conduct Team business with the Team Mission, Vision, and Values at the forefront of decisions;

- Act with honesty and integrity, and conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the nature and responsibilities of Athabasca Rapids Swim Team business and the maintenance of Member confidence;
- Ensure that financial affairs are conducted in a responsible manner with due regard for all fiduciary responsibilities;
- Conduct themselves professionally, lawfully, and in good faith in the best interests of the Athabasca Rapids Swim Team;
- Be independent and impartial and not be driven or influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward, or fear of criticism;
- Behave with decorum appropriate to both circumstance and position, and be fair, equitable, considerate, and honest in all dealings with others;
- Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature;
- Ensure that all Members are given sufficient opportunity to express opinions and that all opinions are given due consideration and weight;
- Respect the decisions of the majority;
- Commit the time to attend meetings and be diligent in preparation for and participation in discussions at such meetings.