



**FREDERICK COUNTY YMCA  
TIDAL FORCE SWIM TEAM  
GENERAL HANDBOOK**



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

**YMCA OF FREDERICK COUNTY**

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# **WELCOME!**

Welcome to the YMCA OF FREDERICK COUNTY Youth Swim Team. We hope that you will find being a member of our organization a great experience. We work hard to develop the abilities of all our swimmers, not just those of a few. Our coaches recognize that swimming constitutes only a portion of a child's life, and although each swimmer is encouraged to achieve his or her maximum potential, our ultimate goal is to help develop happy, emotionally, and physically healthy children with diverse interests.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

To provide an environment which allows each individual to reach his or her maximum potential consistent with his or her own goals;

To encourage swimmers to set challenging goals;

To sponsor a positive team environment;

To produce good swimmers and good kids;

To have fun!

Swimming for the Y has many rewards. We wish you all a terrific swim season!

NATIONAL Y COMPETITIVE SWIMMING MOTTO:

*"Everyone swims, everyone wins!"*

FREDERICK YMCA MISSION:

*"Building excellence through team work and character development!"*

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# 1. Introduction

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## 1.1 A Note to Parents of Prospective Swimmers

Thank you for your interest in the YMCA of Frederick County Tidal Force Swim Team. In the following pages, you will find important information about the team. Please read **all** information carefully.

Some important things to remember:

1. To compete on the winter swim team (September to March), **all swimmers must be members of the Y!** This is a league rule; there are no exceptions. If you cannot afford a membership, scholarships are available. Y membership is not required to swim on the summer team. There is a league fee, required by the League, for each summer swimmer. If you choose to participate in the Y summer specialty meets, you must be a Y Member.
2. **Prior to the first practice**, you will receive a packet of paperwork. This paperwork must be completed and returned BEFORE your swimmer can begin practicing. The required paperwork includes: your swimmer's administrative and group payment slip, emergency medical waiver for you to review for accuracy, swimmer contact information, and the volunteer application to process the basic background check.
3. Dual representation – A swimmer that is on more than one club team roster falls into the dual representation category. Swimmers on the Y swim team are not allowed to represent any other club swim team. If you are a member of a Y team, you may not be on the roster of any other Y team, USA swim team or FSSL team. If you have any questions regarding this rule, please contact the Head Coach.
4. There are program fees that pay for pool time and staff, associated with each season. The practice group determines the amount. Fees are based on the number of practices offered for each group within the season. We also charge an administrative fee to help offset the cost of running the team.
5. There is a non-refundable administrative fee that is due prior to the first practice. This will register your swimmer for his/her approved practice group. The first two weeks of both the summer and winter seasons are trial periods. If you wish to withdraw from the team after this period, you will need to inform the Head Coach in writing of your intention. If no written withdrawal is received, you are responsible for the leveled group payment.
6. Practice times will be given out at the beginning of the season and posted on our web page ([www.frederickymca.org](http://www.frederickymca.org)). The practice times on the calendars are subject to change. You will be notified as quickly as possible of any changes.
7. **While team suits are not required, it is strongly recommended that a good quality competition suit be worn for all swim meets.** If you choose to purchase a non-team suit, your suit needs to be black or black and purple. It is strongly recommended to have a coach size your swimmer during suit fittings to get a properly sized suit even if you are purchasing elsewhere. Team suits will be available for purchase from a retailer chosen by the team. **Team caps and shirt are required at ALL meets.** A team cap is given to each swimmer and additional caps are available for purchase through the Team.

Other swim team apparel will also be available for sale through a team-selected distributor.

## **1.2 About the Y Swim Team - Our History**

The YMCA of Frederick County Swim Team was the first competitive swim program in Frederick County. In 1946, under the leadership of Jack Griffin, the YMCA created the first CO-ED swimming team in Frederick County. It was formed with a few children and parents eager to work towards enriching bodies, minds and spirits by participating in a competitive swimming environment.

Since then, many coaches, swimmers, and parents have benefited from the Y Swim Team's competitive spirit and emphasis on improving swimming skills, as well as teaching good sportsmanship and improving "Body, Mind and Spirit". The ultimate mission of the YMCA of Frederick County Swim Team and its coaching staff is to build excellence through team work and character development.

## **1.3 The Swim Team...How it Works!**

The swim team participates and competes in both a summer and a winter league as well as the additional option of USA swimming. We compete as a team in scored, dual meets (required) as well as optional invitational meets throughout both seasons.

Any child can try out to join the Y swim team upon proving the ability to swim at least two lengths (one freestyle and one backstroke) without a flotation device. The swimmer must demonstrate at the minimum, a rudimentary freestyle (utilizing recognizable rotary breathing and over water arm recovery) and backstroke (good body position and over water arm recovery). The Y does not discriminate based on race, religious beliefs, or disability.

### **Water Practices**

Practices are held selected afternoons, evenings, and mornings at the Y and Walkersville High School. Practice groups and times will be based on the child's swimming ability. For optimal progression, it is suggested that your swimmer attend all the practices for their level, however, no minimum practice is required except for the Force and National Team groupings.

### **Land Practices and Weight Training**

Tidal Force Cross-Training is offered to National Team, Force, Plus, Force Prep, and Rip Tide practice groups throughout the year. This program is designed exclusively for competitive youth swimmers and encompasses such objectives as overall fitness and athleticism, core strength, muscular balance, cardio-respiratory endurance, and flexibility. Cross-Training is a land-based exercise program which complements and/or augments the progressive phases of training the swim team does in the pool. Cross-training replaces some of the in-water conditioning so that other water skills can be addressed. When missing cross-training, your swimmer will miss a part of his/her training. This program is led by coaches with athletic training and physical education backgrounds.

Weight Training will be added for swimmers in Force and others when determined it is appropriate for development. Swimmers will use the Activ Trax training system in the Health and Wellness Center. This web-based training features a virtual workout partner that will guide swimmers through several workouts. ActivTrax will create a new,

customized workout, each visit. These workouts will identify which equipment to use, how to set the weights, and coach on proper technique.

Parents and Swimmers should be aware that given the progressive, skills development orientation of the program, **regular attendance is expected** to prevent injury. Sporadic attendance is strongly discouraged and swimmers who do not attend regularly will be asked not to participate. Please refer to section 2.3 for clothing and equipment.

### **Visualization and Goal Setting Practices**

Visualization will be offered to National Team, Force, Plus, Force Prep, and Rip Tide practice groups throughout the year. Visualization, or mental imagery, is a training technique that helps athletes increase their concentration and reduce the pressures of competition while building athletic confidence. In visualization, a swimmer will create an image or series of images related to their sport in their mind. These can be auditory or kinesthetic images, which the athlete can use to create focus. When used regularly visualization can enhance and elevate a swimmer's performance.

In order to properly visualize, athletes will set both short and long-term goals. These goals will be revisited monthly to check for progress and revised as needed. Low Tide will also have an opportunity to work on goal setting.

### **Meets**

During the winter season (September to March), we swim in the Chesapeake & Potomac (C&P) Swim League. We compete in Invitational meets (many teams against each other; optional), 4 to 5 Dual meets (our team against one other team; required) and a Championship meet (required). The East Field South District meet is required for all swimmers that attain qualifying times during the regular swim season. Swimmers who do not qualify for East Field South Districts in all events are expected to participate in the C&P Championship meet. Attendance at the Short Course YMCA National Championships and Long Course YMCA National Championships is required for all swimmers from age 12 to 18 who attain qualifying times during the regular swim season. Financial aid is available for YMCA Nationals for those with membership scholarships. We require every swimmer to participate in all dual meets and the Championship. A Coach must approve any exceptions before the start of the season.

USA Swimming is available and strongly encouraged for those swimmers in Force Prep and Force. USA Swimming is required for the National training group. Many Y swim teams do both Y and USA swimming, but only participate in a few USA meets during the winter season. Some of the meets we swim are also USA sanctioned through the YMCA. During the summer season, the USA team participates in LC meets. If your swimmer wants to take advantage of USA Swimming, information will be provided at the beginning of the winter swim season. USA Swimming requires additional USA joining fees and a team fee based on a year of participation.

During the summer season (May to July), the team participates in the Frederick Summer Swim League (FSSL). As a team, we compete in 4 Dual meets, at least one large, multi-team meet, and the All-Star meet (all swimmers who attain a qualifying time at an FSSL meet during the season, regardless of age).

## **2. Practice Groups and Practice Responsibilities**

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### **2.1 Practice Groups**

The Team is divided into nine practice groups. For swimmers that are Y members and in either the National Team, Force, Plus, Force Prep, or Rip Tide practice groups, cross-training practices are included at no extra cost. These groups are based on swimmer skill level.

Once your swimmer has been placed into a practice group, he or she may only swim practices with that level. If your swimmer cannot make a practice one week and there are no other practices for that level, then the practice is missed. There are no make-ups for practices missed by the swimmer.

The team does not penalize swimmers if they miss some practices, with the exception of Force and National Team. We do encourage all swimmers to try to attend the recommended number of practices for their level to see consistent improvement and gain confidence in their abilities.

#### **Tidepool Lesson Group**

The Tidepool lesson group is comprised of children who are new to the sport of swimming. These children typically can do 1 length of the pool (25 yards) on their stomach and 1 length of the pool (25 yards) on their back without using a floatation device. This is a 2 day a week practice. Meet attendance is required.

#### **The Ripples Group**

The Ripples practice group is comprised of children who are new to competitive swimming and those who have competed before. Ripples are offered 2-3 practices per week for 45 minutes each. Swimmers are required to swim at least one length of the pool (25 yards) of freestyle, utilizing recognizable rotary breathing and over water recovery of the arms, with the basic mechanics of a flutter kick. Swimmers are also required to swim 25 yards on their back utilizing a good body position (head back, hips up). In addition, these swimmers should be able to demonstrate an additional stroke either breaststroke or butterfly. Major emphasis will be on the development of freestyle and backstroke with the goal of becoming legal in butterfly and breaststroke. When deemed ready by the level Coach to be legal in all four strokes and having completed multiple IM's legally, a swimmer will be moved to Low Tide.

#### **The Low Tide Group**

The Low Tide practice group is a transitional group. Low Tide is made up of swimmers typically, but not limited to, ages 9 or older who are legal in all four strokes and have swum multiple IM's. In this group, freestyle and backstroke techniques are refined through the use of drills. Butterfly and breaststroke are focused on for timing, utilizing drills. This group has three practices per week. This group will have a greater emphasis on building endurance than the Ripples group. The Low Tide will work on competitive and relay starts. They will work on turns for all strokes, including medley events. These swimmers will be introduced to interval swimming. When deemed ready, by the level coach, to have consistently good stroke technique and endurance including appropriate turns, a swimmer will be moved to Rip Tide.

### **The Rip Tide Group**

The Rip Tide group will work on advanced freestyle and backstroke technique and will develop the butterfly and breaststroke to a higher level. Rip Tide is offered 3 practices per week and a session of cross-training once a week. This group will have a greater emphasis on building endurance and interval training. The Rip Tides will be responsible for appropriate turns and breakouts for all strokes, including medley events. A strong emphasis will be placed on underwater kicking off the walls. When deemed ready by the Coach to have consistent stroke technique in all four strokes, endurance, efficient turns and appropriate underwater kicking off the wall, a swimmer will move to Force Prep.

### **The Force Prep Group**

Swimmers in this group are more mature and ready for a more challenging workout than the Rip Tide group. Swimmers in this group are typically 12 years of age or older and have a greater understanding of stroke techniques for all four strokes. They are able to use an effective competitive dive, relay starts, and consistently apply appropriate turns with underwater kicking and breakouts. The swimmers in this group must have the endurance to consistently complete repeated 50s on an interval during practice and be approaching, or have, District time cuts. These swimmers are capable of competing in long distance events. They will practice 5 times per week with mandatory cross-training twice a week and an optional cross-training once a week. Force Prep Swimmers are strongly encouraged to join USA Swimming. To be considered for moving up to Force, swimmers will be looked at for lane etiquette, attitude, stroke technique, and endurance. Swimmers are expected to attend all practices and cross-training if they are prepping to move into the Force group.

### **The Plus Group**

Swimmers in this group are typically closing the gap between Force Prep and Force. Age is also a factor when considering the swimmers in the Plus group. Many of these swimmers enjoy the distance events and need more endurance than Force Prep allows. This group will have a minimum practice requirement of 4 water practices and 2 cross training practices a week; When a swimmer in this group shows extremely high practice attendance, lane etiquette, endurance, and stroke technique they will be moved to the Force group. **Note:** If swimmers choose to limit their practices, they are taking the chance of injuring themselves in this group. If a swimmer cannot attend the minimum practice requirement, they will have the option to move to the Force Prep group with NO minimum requirement.

### **The Force Group**

These swimmers must be adept at the proper performance of all four strokes. Swimmers must have a high degree of endurance. They must be able to do multiple repetitions of 100s and be able to compete in the 400 IM and 500 Free. Swimmers in this group are typically 13 years and older. All strokes, turns, and starts will be refined using a variety of coaching techniques, as well as continued building of endurance. These swimmers will practice 7-9 times a week in the water and 3 times a week on land. This group has a minimum practice requirement of 6 water practices a week and 3 cross training (Oct- Nov, Feb-March). During high school swim season, if a swimmer is participating in swimming, a 4 water-practice minimum is required. Please note this will only keep them at their current practice level but limit their improvement and endurance. These swimmers are encouraged to work towards achieving the goals they



have set for themselves for the season. Force swimmers are strongly encouraged to join USA Swimming. Many college coaches use the USA Swimming time search for recruiting swimmers into their programs and proving the times submitted by swimmers for review. Swimmers new to Force from Force Prep should set a goal of 5 water practices per week as they transition into Force. **Note:** If swimmers choose to limit their practices, they are taking the chance of injuring themselves in this group. If a swimmer cannot attend the minimum practice requirement, they will have the option to move to the Force Prep group with NO minimum requirement.

## **The National Training Group**

These swimmers must have met the summer or winter YMCA National Competition cut and be 12 or older. Swimmers in the National Training Group will have 9-11 water practices per week and 3 land practices including weights. When a swimmer qualifies for a National competition or achieves an equivalent time, they will be moved into the National Training Group. Morning National Team practices are not to be used to replace an afternoon practice. These practices are additional for this group. During high school swim season, a 6 water-practice minimum is required. National Swimmers must be USA Swimmers.

### **2.2 Practice Schedules**

The monthly practice calendar will be emailed to families and posted on our web site. A goggle calendar will be available online and for viewing by the pool doors.

### **2.3 Practice Equipment**

The following items are required for all swimmers in Rip Tide, Tide, Force Prep, Plus, Force, and National Training practice groups:

#### **Low Tide, Waves and Ripples Equipment (Optional)**

Long Fins- Speedo Trialon Rubber Swim Fins

#### **Rip Tide Practice Equipment (Required)**

Snorkel – SPEEDO Bullet Head Swim Snorkel

Long Fins – Speedo Trialon Rubber Swim Fins

Nose Plug – No strap needed (clear is NOT recommended)

Water Bottle – reusable

Mesh Bag- to hold equipment; do not bring equipment without a bag

#### **TIDE and Force Prep Swimming Practice Equipment (Required)**

Snorkel – SPEEDO Bullet Head Swim Snorkel

Short Fins – FINIS Positive Drive Fins

Long Fins – Speedo Trialon Rubber Swim Fins

Nose Plug – No strap needed (clear is NOT recommended)

Water Bottle – reusable

Mesh Bag- to hold equipment; do not bring equipment without a bag

#### **Plus, Force & National Swimming Practice Equipment (Required)**

Snorkel – SPEEDO Bullet Head Swim Snorkel

Short Fins – FINIS Positive Drive Fins

Long Fins – Speedo Trialon Rubber Swim Fins

Nose Plug – No strap needed (clear is NOT recommended)

Paddles- SPEEDO Power Paddles, SPEEDO Contoured Swim Paddles or Paddles that can have strap removes and only a strap for the middle finger. Must be big

enough to have some space around the hands, not rectangular paddles. We are moving away from the black YMCA paddles, please get larger paddles appropriate for your size.

Water Bottle – reusable

Mesh Bag- to hold equipment; do not bring equipment without a bag

\*\*\*National Team – scuba weight belt for water work\*\*\*

### **Cross Training Equipment (Required)**

Good running or fitness sneakers

Compression shorts under shorts for male and female

Sports Bra for female

NO spaghetti strap shirts or mid-drift shirts please

Jump rope – Speed jump rope

Water bottle – reusable

## **2.4 What to Bring to Practice**

1. Swim bag with towel, shampoo, and conditioner for showering after practice. Chlorine will dry the hair & skin.
2. A practice suit. Having an extra suit in your bag is a good idea for when a suit develops a rip or tear. **It is not recommended that the team suit be worn for practice.**
3. Auro-dri for getting water out of ears and preventing swimmer's ear is good to keep in your bag for after practice. Auro-dri can be purchased in a drug store or you can make your own (1:1 white vinegar/rubbing alcohol).
4. A good pair of goggles and a spare. A swimmer should learn to swim in a race without goggles, but for practice, goggles are a must. The water in the pool will irritate the eyes. Swimmers often have problems finding goggles that fit properly. You may have to try several different kinds before you find the ones that your swimmer likes best or be fitted at a suit dealer.
5. A reusable plastic bottle for water. It is important to stay hydrated when exercising.
6. Good attitude and sportsmanship. Use the water to pound out your daily frustrations ("leave it all in the water"). Respect the Coaches and other swimmers in your lane. Swimmers who interfere with other swimmers' practices will be removed from the lane and/or the pool.
7. Swimming caps are a good idea for swimmers. It helps keep hair from going into your eyes and it provides some protection against chlorine.
8. Before practice starts, besides a kickboard, find out what other equipment will be needed for the practice. Get all of these items together prior to warming up. Be sure to put **ALL** equipment away after practice.
9. Remove all jewelry before practice and leave it at home. The Coaches do not want to be responsible for these valuable items. Contacts are also a source of problems. Make sure you have a place to keep them or wear your glasses to practice. Prescription goggles are available through various vendors both locally and online.
10. Make sure your swimmer is at practice on time and that he or she is picked up promptly.

11. Make sure you or your swimmer checks their folder at every practice.
12. A lock for your locker (see #9 above). Consider nothing to be safe in a locker that is not locked. There is no safe hiding place for an unlocked item.

## **2.5 Parents at Practice**

While the Y has an open-door policy towards parents being on the deck during practice, please realize that this can be very distracting for both the Coaches and the swimmers. If you choose to remain on the deck, please be considerate.

- **Swimmers under the age of nine must have a parent or guardian (18 or over) in the YMCA building or on deck during practice. This also applies to facilities where the team practices and competes.**
- Do not approach the Coaches during practice. They will be happy to discuss your child with you before or after practice.
- Try to sit in a spot away from the lane in which your child is swimming. Children are often torn between paying attention to the Coach and checking on mom or dad. If you are not readily visible, the Coach has a better chance of keeping your child's attention.
- Do not coach your child at practice. The Coaches have a skill progression plan for each swimmer, and while you may think your child is ready for another skill, it is the Coaches who need to make the decision.
- While we realize that practice time is a great opportunity to socialize with other parents, please do this outside of the pool area. If you are on the deck observing practice, please keep conversation to a minimum and speak quietly so as not to be a distraction to our swimmers and Coaches. Any parent disrupting practice will be asked to leave the pool area.

## **2.6 Questions During Practice**

If you have a quick question for a Coach, most are available immediately after practice. If you feel that more time is needed, please contact the Coach you wish to speak with and schedule a meeting. Contacting a Coach by way of their personal home or cell phone should be limited to emergencies. All of the Coaches have email that you should use. These addresses are listed in Section 6. If you have questions concerning a meet, swim team event, or anything else, call the Tidal Force office or check our web site first, as directed in Section 6 of this handbook.

# **3. Swim Meets**

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## **3.1 General Information**

At swim meets, each swimmer will be entered into events in accordance with league rules as well as their ability. This may include individual as well as relay events. Events must be swum in the swimmer's age group. General age groups are:

- |                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| 8 and under;     | 13 and 14 years;   |
| 9 and 10 years;  | 15 through 18 year |
| 11 and 12 years; |                    |

These groups are based on age at the beginning of the season (Winter team – December 1<sup>st</sup>; Summer team – June 1<sup>st</sup>). Six and under age groups are only for

summer competition and specialized winter season meets. The Coaches have the final decision regarding which events (individual and relay) your swimmer will swim in dual meets. At times last minute changes, due to illness or injury, may have to be made to relays that may exclude or include other swimmers. It is the Coach's job to select the best relay to represent the team. We will not put a child in an event which they do not have a reasonable chance of completing successfully (without disqualifying). Swim meets are for fun competition in an organized, healthy environment.

Optional invitational meets follow the same age group event restrictions; however, the swimmer chooses which events to enter, based on the meet specifications.

We swim as a team in all League competitions, so all League meets are required in order to participate on the team. Participation in meets is the best way for swimmers to gauge where they are in meeting their personal goals as well as for the Coaches to determine individual development. If you have prior engagements, you must see a Coach before committing your child to the team. In case of illness, please contact a Coach as soon as possible. "Line-ups" are made well in advance of the meet, and much thought and strategy go into where swimmers are placed. Changes must be made before the start of the meet. If we know your child is ill, it may be possible to put another swimmer in the event, especially in the case of relays. Unless you have a pressing engagement after the meet, please stay until the last event to support the rest of the team.

**Parents are responsible to work half of every meet their child competes in.** Parents are only allowed on the pool deck at a meet in an official capacity (i.e., timer, scorer, official, judge, runner, etc.). Parental coaching on the deck during practice or the meets is **not** allowed. No swimmer may be touched or assisted from the water until the entire race is over. This could result in disqualification (DQ) of that swimmer. If a parent disagrees with an official's decision concerning their child's event, they must talk to the Coach – and do so prior to the end of the meet. Only a Coach may approach an Official concerning a DQ. Keep in mind, however, that usually the judgment of the Official stands, and changes in a call are RARELY made. Officials are human, and can make mistakes, but they are also trained in the rules of competitive swimming, which most parents aren't. What looks good to you may be illegal.

**Swimmers under the age of 13 must have a parent or guardian (18 or older and not a participant) sign their swimmer into the meet and indicate who is responsible for them at the meet. That parent or guardian must remain at the meet when they are not volunteering to supervise their swimmer.**

### **3.2 Swim Meet Parent Worker Responsibility and Position Descriptions**

IT TAKES 40+ WORKERS, PER HALF, TO SUCCESSFULLY RUN A SWIM MEET! EXPECT TO WORK AT THE MEETS!

The following positions must be filled each swim meet in order for the meet to take place. Being on the swim team is a commitment for the family. **All families are required to have a parent available to work 1/2 of each meet.** If you are unwilling to make this commitment perhaps another team would better suit your needs.

#### **Meet Worker Coordinator (Volunteer in Charge):**

- Sets up swimmer and parent work check in;
- Ensures all meet worker positions are staffed and running smoothly for both halves;
- Documents which parents actually worked during each meet;
- Act as a liaison between the different meet workers and the Coaches.

**Computer System:**

Using multiple computer systems to accurately calculate the swim meet results.

**Scorer's Table:**

Scoring the swim meet involves verifying and resolving any discrepancy when necessary. During this job, you will be comparing times to make sure mistakes have not occurred. The computer does the actual scoring of the meet.

**Ribbon Writer:**

Ribbons are awarded for top finishers (the meet will dictate how many place ribbons are awarded), and for swimmers recording a "best time". At most meets, the computer will print out labels, which are then double-checked and placed on the proper ribbon. In the rare event of computer problems, ribbon writers handwrite the necessary information on the back of the appropriate ribbons. After the ribbons have labels on them, they will be placed into the swimmer's ribbon folders.

**Official:**

Stroke & Turn Judges watch swimmers to make sure strokes and turns are performed legally. The starter announces and starts each event with an electronic starting system. The Referee runs the meet, oversees stroke, and turn Officials and timers, and combines events when necessary. These positions require special training. Training opportunities are announced at the beginning of each season.

**Timer:**

Timers time the events using digital stopwatches. Timing starts as soon as the starting signal sounds and stops when the swimmer touches the wall on the final lap. It is important to know how many laps are to be swum for each event. The recording timer in each lane records each timer's results on the event sheet for that lane. The Head Timer oversees all lanes and ensures that all timing sheets are collected by the runner after the race. He or she also serves as a backup timer in case a watch is not started correctly or malfunctions in one of the lanes.

**Runner:**

The runner collects the timer sheets from each lane after every event and delivers them to the scoring table.

**Clerk of Course:**

The Clerk of Course lines swimmers up prior to each event. It is a great way to get to know all the swimmers and to stay in the team area with your child.

**Assistant Clerks:**

The Assistant Clerks aid the Clerk of Course by getting the swimmers to the proper event, heat, and lane.

**Hospitality (Home meets Only):**

Sets up and maintains the concession stand for swimmers and guests. Help is also needed bringing complimentary beverages to officials, timers, scorers, ribbon writers, and other parents working the meet who cannot leave their positions to get refreshments.

**Greeters- Please wear the reflective vest (Winter home meets Only):**

Stand by the cafeteria door and greet our team and the other team's families. Responsible for coming early and helping remove tables from the cafeteria.

### **Heat Winner Ribbons (Summer Only):**

This job requires the volunteer to watch each heat and hand the winner of each heat a special "Heat Winner" ribbon. In a close finish, when it is unclear as to which swimmer came in first, the volunteer should use the scoreboard to determine the first-place heat winner.

### **3.3 Specific Swim Meet Information**

Please see the Before the Meet, During the Meet, and After the Meet information booklet.

### **3.4 Championship Attire**

Families are required to pay a Championship Meet attire fee (Districts and Nationals). This fee will include a team cap and a team shirt or uniform. This fee will be kept at a minimum.

### **3.5 Travel Meet/ Prelim-Final Meet Expectations**

Swimmers who have signed up for a travel meet or a prelim-final meet such as YOTA, Winterfest, Districts, Nationals etc. must be available for the entire meet. If your swimmer swims in prelims and makes finals they will be expected to swim in the finals competition.

## **4. Parental Responsibilities**

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### **4.1 HOW TO MAKE PAYMENTS**

Your swimmer will have been placed in their practice groups and you will be emailed with this information. Before your swimmer's first practice, the administrative fee (\$65 per swimmer) and payment form must be completed. All of the paperwork that you received at the Parent Meeting or at your swimmer's evaluation, must be complete and turned in before their next practice as well.

If your swimmer has been given a spot on the Team but you do not complete the required paperwork, have not bought a membership, and have not paid the \$65 administration fee and payment form by the first practice, your swimmer's spot will be offered to a swimmer from the Wait List.

For your convenience, the practice group fees are divided into three payments. You may pay in full if you wish. When paying for your practice group fees in installments, you will complete the Auto Draft Payment Agreement. Three equal payments will be drafted; Winter October 15, November 15 and December 15.

The Frederick County YMCA does not wish to discourage any swimmer from participation due to financial reasons. There are scholarships available for membership. Please speak with a front desk staff member for more information.

If the program fees or payment schedules are too much for you, please contact Assistant Aquatics Director Alisa Willoughby or Coach Christine to discuss what options might be available.

## 4.2 Background Check and Safe Sport Training

Safe Sport is a federal law enacted in January 2018 that lays out guidelines for protecting athletes. As part of the enactment of the law, The US Center for SafeSport was opened, it's mission is to make athlete well-being the centerpiece of our nation's sports culture. All athletes deserve to participate in sports free from bullying, hazing, sexual misconduct or any form of emotional or physical abuse. For more information go to: [www.safesport.org](http://www.safesport.org)

To ensure compliance with all applicable laws, and to continue to strengthen our ability to protect youth in our care from abuse, **ALL** volunteers/officials must take the following steps to ensure policies and procedures for abuse prevention and reporting align with the law.

- **REQUIRED TRAINING:** For volunteers/officials, you must complete the ONLINE Safe Sport Training and a background check.

All YMCA volunteers aged 18+ must have a limited background check that is valid for a period of one year, and must be renewed annually as long as your child swims for FCY. At the beginning of the season, new and renewing volunteers will receive a volunteer application along with registration paperwork. Completed forms can be turned in to a Lead Coach or placed in a sealed envelope and put in the red folder in the swim team file cabinet near the pool door. Coach Cynthia Kuske is responsible for ensuring that these forms get turned in and renewed annually. You may contact her at [ckuske@frederickymca.org](mailto:ckuske@frederickymca.org) if you have any general questions. Jill Slaughter is responsible for processing the background checks. You may contact her at [jslaughter@frederickymca.org](mailto:jslaughter@frederickymca.org) if you have questions about the company processing the forms or if you need more detailed information.

## 4.3 Committees

Parent workers help the Coaches with the day-to-day operations of the swim team. This allows the staff to concentrate on coaching and leave many of the other aspects of managing the team to the parents. These parent workers help by running the concession stands, working various jobs at the swim meets, soliciting help for swim meets and other team events, typing, copying and compiling paper work, making phone calls, organizing fund raisers, and social activities. Due to the growing number of swimmers, it has become impossible for a handful of people to complete all the work needed to run our swim team. For this reason, we ask that at least one parent from each family give their time and energy to work on one of our committees.

### Communication Committee:

This committee assists the coaching staff in getting information out to the team families in a variety of ways. There are tasks that can be done by either a group of parents or by just an individual. The following are the big ones:

- **Media Contact** – Individual or group led by a Media Chair. Contacts the newspapers after each meet to report the results.

- **Family Folder and Ribbon Boxes** – Sets up the folders at the beginning of the season and helps to maintain them throughout the season. Brings the folders in boxes to all away meets.
- **Carpool Document** – Maintains a document with addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, and school attending to help people with being able to communicate for carpooling.

#### **Social Activities Committee:**

In addition to practicing and swimming in meets, the swimmers enjoy taking part in team-based social events each season. Parent workers are needed to organize and conduct these events.

- **Late Night at the Y** – The team tries to have at least one late night at the Y each Winter season for all the team members. Participants get to take part in supervised activities including, but not always limited to: swimming, dinner, games, snacks, and movies.
- **Caroling** – Sometime during the Christmas season, the team goes caroling through the Y neighborhood and/or at a local nursing home. Afterwards, there are snacks and activities at the Y. This activity is often combined with the team holiday party.
- **Parties** – The team occasionally hosts parties. In the past, we have had Halloween and Christmas parties. We have also hosted special meets.
- **Character Counts Activities** – We try to demonstrate to swimmers the philosophy of Character Counts, and therefore try to perform at least one service project a season. In the past, we have brought Christmas gifts to the patients at the Odd Fellows home and have caroled at nearby nursing homes. The swimmers have a great time singing and socializing with the seniors. We have also been involved with the YMCA of Frederick County Corporate Cup, the Bill Hudak Swim-a-thon, and Special Olympics.
- **Other Activities** – In the past, we have had an afternoon at Kid Zone, trips to the movies, laser tag night, etc.

#### **Fundraising Committee:**

Individual or group responsible for fundraising events including dinner out, Christmas wreaths, T-shirts, photography, etc.

#### **Level Parents Committee:**

A parent is responsible for each practice level. This parent is responsible for answering any questions from other parents and creating leveled group activities a few times during the season.

#### **Winterfest and District Committee:**

This group is responsible for getting donations and putting together snack bags for swimmers while at the meet. Bags will need to be prepared for each day the swimmer is competing.



## **5. Behavior Expectations and Discipline Policies**

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### **5.1 Behavior of Swimmers Before, During, and After Practices and Swim Meets**

While we want practice to be fun, we also need to realize that it is work which will help our children achieve their swimming goals. In order to have practices and swim meets run smoothly, we ask your help with the following:

- Please accompany your child into the building to ensure that he or she is going directly to practice. Children are not allowed to roam around. Members have the option of going to the Youth Center until it is time to go to practice and sign themselves out if needed. A swimmer should NEVER be left at WHS or MHS unless a Coach is present.
- Please be at the Y, WHS, or MHS on time to pick up your child. This will help control the child's behavior in the building and will keep the coaches from having to stay late waiting for swimmers to be picked up. Please refer to section 5.4.
- Please talk to your child about his or her behavior before practice/meets, at practice/meets, in the locker room, and after practice/meets. Our coaches are there to help all swimmers achieve their best. It is hard on them and other swimmers when part of the team sees practice as just another free swim time. The Y has members who are not part of the swim team. When team members misbehave in front of other Y members, it reflects badly on the rest of the team. Remember, that our coaches deserve respect, as do fellow teammates. Please ask your child to listen to the coaches and to save the playtime and extended conversation for times outside of practice.

To help control the above-mentioned problems, we have come up with a 3 strike system, late arrival policy, drop off and pick-up procedure, locker room policy, technology policy, and PDA policy.

### **5.2 Three Strikes**

During practice, swimmers will be given three strikes. A strike is any kind of behavior not appropriate at swim practice or which is disruptive to the coaches or swimmers (e.g., talking back to the coaches, horseplay, purposely ignoring coach's instructions, fighting, inappropriate language, endangering, etc.). On the third strike, the swimmer will be removed from the pool and asked to sit quietly on deck. If the child receives three strikes, the parent is informed. Consistently acquiring three strikes can result in suspension from the team.

### **5.3 Late Arrivals**

No swimmer will be permitted to come into practice after warm-ups unless they have a written parental excuse, or the parent informs the Coach that the swimmer is legitimately late. If your child will be consistently late due to schedule conflicts, please inform the coaches so that your child will be allowed into practice. The parents of any child who is turned away from practice will be called. Any child not permitted to practice will be asked to sit quietly on deck until practice is over.

## **5.4 Tidal Force Swim Team Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures**

**Children ages 8 and under are required to have a designated responsible adult in the building with them at all times during swim meets or practices.**

Children ages 9 and up may be dropped off for swim practice or swim meets.

**Children are required to be picked up no more than 15 minutes after the official end time of practice.** Please refer to the schedule for your child's practice group for official start and end times of practices. If you are running late, please call the Coach to let them know you are on your way. Please understand that staff has other commitments after practice ends, and YMCA policy dictates that 2 staff members must be present in all circumstances. Children also get upset when their parents are late.

The following late pick up procedures will apply:

1 <sup>st</sup> Offense:	Warning
2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Offense:	\$1.00 per each minute you are late picking up
4 <sup>th</sup> Offense:	Suspension for the next scheduled practice
5 <sup>th</sup> Offense:	Child may be removed from the swim team

*Please note:*

*YMCA will attempt to make contact with parents/emergency contacts in the event of a late pick-up. If we are unable to make contact within 60 minutes of the end of practice, and no one has arrived to pick up the child, Police or local authorities will be called to pick up the child.*

Late pick-up fees must be paid at the front desk prior to the next scheduled practice. Receipt from the front desk should be presented to the head swim coach at the child's practice. If fees are not paid by this time, the child will not be able to participate in the program. If a child is suspended or removed from the swim team for excessive late pick up, there will be no refunds for program fees paid.

## **5.5 Locker Room Policy (applicable at all pools)**

The locker room is the place to dress for practice, shower before and after practice, and to dress to go home. Socializing in the locker room is not discouraged unless a swimmer is habitually late for practice or going home, is yelling or screaming, is involved in horseplay, etc. It will never be okay to have any form of rough play, including towel snapping and "5 stars", while using the locker rooms. Dangerous, obnoxious, and loud behavior will not be tolerated. If a swimmer is found misbehaving in the locker room three times in a row, disciplinary action will be taken. The swimmer(s) involved may be asked to use only the parent-child changing rooms or they could lose locker room privileges completely. Repeat offenders are subject to suspension from the team.

## **5.6 USA/FCY Technology Policy**

The Frederick County YMCA Swim Team recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today's world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While FCY acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, FCY also realizes that there are associated

risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

### **GENERAL CONTENT**

All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Safe Sport/Athlete Protection and the Applicable Adult must be copied in the communication.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: "Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?" or "Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, the board, or other athletes?"

**TEXTING** Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 8am until 8pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities absent emergency circumstances.

**EMAIL** Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 8am and 8pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied absent emergency circumstances.

**REQUEST TO COMMUNICATE AND DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS** The Applicable Adult of an athlete must request their swimmers' email be placed onto the general email communication to receive emails from the coach. The Applicable adult of an athlete must request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

Please note that swimmers are not permitted to use any recording devices in the locker rooms. If a swimmer uses apps like Snap Chat, Instagram, Twitter etc. in a derogatory manner, he or she is subject to suspension from the team.

**PROHIBITED ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION** Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes and such Applicable Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from minor athletes, unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact as opposed to regular contact. Existing social media connections with minor athletes must be discontinued. Minor athletes may "friend" the club and/or LSC's official page.

Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes must not send private, instant or direct messages to a minor athlete through social media platforms.

### **5.7 PDA Policy**

The YMCA is a Christian organization. Swimmers are not permitted to display inappropriate displays of affection. These include but not limited to sitting on laps, sitting with blankets covering, kissing, and or "making out".

## 5.8 Bullying Policy

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct and Frederick YMCA Swim team prohibits and will not tolerate bullying:

*The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:*

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;*
- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;*
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;*
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or*
- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).*

## 6. Information Sources

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### 6.1 Coaches to the Families

- **EMAIL:** Be sure that the Head Coach has your current email address(es). This is the first line of communication that is used to disseminate information. It is recommended that you check for emails prior to leaving for practice or meets. While rare, the pool has been unexpectedly closed at times. An email with the information will be sent out. All attempts will be made to quickly get the information posted on the webpage as well as phone calls made to families affected first by the changes.
- **REMIND 101 APP:** Each season you will receive information for registering for the Remind app. This is for emergency reminders which include practice changes and cancellations, weather related delays for swim meets, and other urgent reminders.
- **FAMILY AND RIBBON FOLDERS:** These are organized by swimmer's last name. They should be checked at least once a week, if not more. They are for the coaches to get information **TO** the families. Inside each Family Folder, will be a folder with each family's swimmer's name (one per swimmer). This is the Ribbon Folder for your individual swimmer. Event ribbons are usually filed at the meet, Cap Cards, Team Record Stars, Best Time and Participation ribbons are printed, assembled and filed within 2 – 3 days after a meet. The Family and Ribbon Folders should not be confused with the RED folder. **DO NOT place any communication to a Coach in a Family Folder.** These folders are kept in the file cabinet by the pool door.
- **GENERAL FILES:** These are in the file drawer labeled "General Files/Red Folder/Coaches". This is where you will find hard copies of information found on the webpage and sent by email. To cut down on waste, only a few hard copies will be printed.

- **WEBPAGE:** The team webpage contains many useful links to monthly calendars, specialty meet notices, and event fliers. General team information as well as upcoming events will be posted on the page.
- **PHONE CALLS:** It is rare to receive a phone call from a Coach. However, in the case of an unexpected pool closing or an emergency, calls will be made. Please be sure the team has current and correct phone numbers for your family.

## 6.2 Families to the Coaches

- **EMAIL:** This is the preferred method for contacting a coach. If you are unsure of whom to email send your correspondence to the General Team mailbox.

General Swim Team                              [swimteam@frederickymca.org](mailto:swimteam@frederickymca.org)

Aquatic Director  
Samm Meddaugh      [smeddaugh@frederickymca.org](mailto:smeddaugh@frederickymca.org)

Assistant Aquatic Director  
Alisa Willoughby      [awilloughby@frederickymca.org](mailto:awilloughby@frederickymca.org)

Head Coach (National Team, Force, Plus, Lead Coach)  
Christine Oland      [coland@frederickymca.org](mailto:coland@frederickymca.org)

Rip Tide and Force Prep Lead Coach  
Becky Bostian      [bbostian@frederickymca.org](mailto:bbostian@frederickymca.org)

Low Tide Lead Coaches  
Amy Hain                                      [maamhain@yahoo.com](mailto:maamhain@yahoo.com)  
Aimee Watkins                              [awatkins1214@gmail.com](mailto:awatkins1214@gmail.com)

Lead Coach Ripples and Volunteer Certification  
Cynthia Kuske      [ckuske@frederickymca.org](mailto:ckuske@frederickymca.org)

Tidepool Lead Coach  
TBD

Team Cross Trainers  
Tara O'Shea                                      [taraoshea07@gmail.com](mailto:taraoshea07@gmail.com)  
Holly Stover

Team Visualization Coach  
Holly Stover                                      [Hollysue@me.com](mailto:Hollysue@me.com)

- **PHONE:** Coaches make every attempt to return phone messages within 24 hours.

Tidal Force Office                              (301) 663-5131 x 1259 (*Direct line & messages*)

Asst. Aquatics Director                              (301) 663-5131 x 1283 (*Direct line & messages*)

Aquatics Director                              (301) 663-5131 x 1273 (*Direct line & messages*)

- **RED FOLDER:** This is one place to put something for a Coach. It is also the place to put your meet entry forms and payment receipts. This folder is the first folder in the General File section of the file cabinet (third drawer down).

- **COACHES FOLDERS:** Each Coach has a folder that can be found behind the Red Folder.
- **WALL BOXES:** There are boxes on the wall next to the team file cabinet for Asst. Aquatics Director Alisa Willoughby and Coach Christine. Items can be placed here that will not fit in the Red folder.
- **FRONT DESK:** Messages and larger items can be left at the Front Desk. The staff will either place it in the Team mail box or have it brought down to the Team office.

### 6.3 Email

The general swim team email box is swimteam@frederickymca.org. This email will be checked daily by the coaches and either answered immediately or redirected to the appropriate staff member.

E-mails will also be sent out as quickly as possible with any changes in schedules. If you have any questions regarding swim team activities occurring the day of inclement weather, please check your email or the website before calling a member of the coaching staff.

### 6.4 Websites

FCY Tidal Force	<a href="http://www.frederickymca.org">www.frederickymca.org</a>
C&P League (Winter)	<a href="http://www.cpsl.info">www.cpsl.info</a>
FSSL (Summer)	<a href="http://www.swimfssl.org">www.swimfssl.org</a>
MD LSC USA Swimming	<a href="http://www.mdswim.org">www.mdswim.org</a>

You can find our web site by clicking on the Aquatics link from the Y homepage ([www.frederickymca.org](http://www.frederickymca.org)). Once on the Aquatics homepage, the Team's link is on the left-hand side of the page. Please check it regularly as we are in the process of updating it and will continue to add useful content throughout the season.

## 7. YMCA of Frederick County Pool Rules

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### Lifeguards

All patrons must obey the instructions of the lifeguard.

### Children

- Children under the age of 9 must be accompanied by an adult.
- All children ages infant to three years of age are required to wear an approved swim diaper or a disposable swim diaper covered by plastic pants as per Health Department regulation.
- If a child requires a flotation device, he/she must be accompanied in the water by a parent or adult in swimming attire.
- No child is allowed in the deep end with a flotation device regardless if he/she is accompanied by an adult.
- Children are not allowed to play on the steps.
- No strollers are allowed on the pool deck.
- Children are not allowed to be on the back or front of their parent/guardian while swimming.

**Showers**

All swimmers must take a shower prior to using the pool as per Health Department regulation.

**Shoes**

Spectators must remove shoes BEFORE entering the pool area or cover shoes with shoe covers. Lifeguards are required to instruct the patrons to either take off their shoes or place the covers over their shoes. Covers are available at the entrance into the pool area.

**Food and drink**

Food, drink (with the exception of water) and gum are not permitted in the pool area.

**Equipment**

Balls, toys or equipment will not be given out to the participants. However, swimmers are allowed to bring toys and /or balls with them to the pool. Kickboards, white barbells, fins, and noodles are to be used only during instruction. These items are not allowed to be used during Open Rec. Kickboards are allowed to be used by lap swimmers during Adult Lap and Open Rec.

**Clothing**

All swimmers must wear a bathing suit to the pool.

**Jumping**

Patrons are only allowed to jump forward.