

Jamestown Jaws Swim Club Handbook

Jaws Vision: To create lifelong champions and athletes of character.

Jaws Mission: Jaws Swim Club will provide quality swimming instruction, in a fun competitive environment, to all athletes of any age and level, in south central North Dakota.

This handbook is made available for athletes and parents to learn about the sport of swimming and outline various policies affecting all swimmers, year after year. All families should read the handbook, and become familiar with important facts and rules of the Jamestown Jaws Swim Club. In addition to this handbook USA swimming members and their families should be familiar with the USA Code of Conduct. It can be found on the Jaws website or at this link <https://www.usaswimming.org/articles-landing-page/2017/04/06/2017-code-of-conduct>.

We hope that this handbook will provide our members with answers to questions in regards to swimming on a team in general, and specifically with the Jamestown Jaws Swim Club.

The Jamestown Jaws Swim Club is a USA Swimming sanctioned age group competitive swim Club. It consists of multiple levels of swimmer ages and abilities. USA Swimming age group swimming program is America's largest program of guided fitness activity for children, and builds a lifetime foundation of good health by teaching healthy fitness habits, developing aerobic endurance, muscular development, natural flexibility, and coordination. Swimming will be a sport to bring swimmers fitness and enjoyment for life. There are moments of success and disappointment, which gives great opportunities for self-control and mental tenacity. The team will give athletes practice at being a team player, making friends, and most importantly allow them to have fun.

Role of the Coaches

Under the direction of the Head Coach, the coaching staff will organize, design and facilitate practices. In order to maintain safety and provide quality coaching to all our swimmers various abilities our team is organized into training groups. Being part of a team is about more than just swimming. It's also about camaraderie, teamwork, goal setting, athletic excellence, responsibility, volunteerism, respect, honesty, a competitive spirit, and family.

Our dedicated and professional coaching staff strive to develop our athletes' body, mind and spirit through training that is rigorous, yet age and ability appropriate, and fun.

If you have any concerns about your child's experience in the pool, you are welcome to discuss it with the head coach outside of practice hours. You can communicate via email, or make an appointment to meet with the coach.

Our coaches work many hours, both on and off the pool deck, to ensure the success of our swimmers. They have the best interests of your child, but also the team, in mind. Please support their coaching decisions. Again, any concerns can be brought to the coach's attention.

Payment Terms

All swimmers must register with USA Swimming. The cost is in addition to the season fees.

- **NDLSC (Local Swimming Committee) registration fee**
 - This fee is determined by the NDLSC and all funds collected for this goes directly to NDLSC.
 - NDLSC Outreach membership available for qualified swimmers at reduced rate.

- **Season fee**
 - No refunds will be given if the swimmer does not finish the season.
 - Option 1 – Pay the season in full at the beginning of the season.
 - Option 2 – Pay for season in 2 installments. Payment dates set at the start of the season.
 - Option 3 – Swimmers on Free/Reduced lunch program qualify for reduced season fees.
- **Trial period**
 - New to competitive swimming members will be given a 14 day trial period. If the individual chooses not to continue at the end of the 14 day period, they must submit in writing their intent to jawsswimteam@gmail.com . If no notification is received, the member will be assessed all fees as appropriate.

The Jaws Board of Director's treasurer will keep a financial record for each Jaws family. A statement will be provided to each family when payment is owed. If payment is not received according to the options above, a notice of delinquency will be e-mailed. If parent/guardian fails to pay any delinquent dues or assessment within 30 days from the date of such notice of delinquency, the swimmer shall be suspended from further participation in Jaws activities, including, but not limited to, practices and meets.

Practice Goals

Swimming is an individual sport. Practice will be geared toward what the individual needs. Practices will be designed to develop stamina, teach proper stroke technique in all four strokes, and improve the dive, flip-turn and stroke finish. The swimmers will be divided into training groups by ability. Each training group has a season training plan mapped out and broken down by weeks and practices. To learn more about the training groups please visit www.jamestownjaws.com/training-groups.

- **Equipment needed for practice**
 - Practice suit (must be specifically designed for competition and training)
 - Goggles
 - Cap (1 Jaws cap given out at time of registration)
 - Reusable water bottle

Expectations of Swimmers during practice

Swimmers need to be prepared for practice by being water ready at the start time of practice. If a swimmer needs time to change or stretch prior to entering the water they should arrive to the pool with enough time to accomplish this. The start time of practice is when the swimmer is expected to be in the water. (i.e. if practice begins at 4pm the swimmer needs to be water ready by 4pm, not just arriving.)

Swimmers must respect their fellow teammates and coaches. If a swimmer is disrespectful towards teammates, coaches, or athletes from other teams, the coaches have the authority to provide age appropriate positive discipline. This includes redirecting the athlete, pulling the athlete aside and discussing their actions or issuing a "time-out".

Attendance at Swim Meets

Team apparel must be worn at swim meet competitions (team suit and team swim cap). A swimmer is not eligible to swim in the next meet if they have delinquent meet entry fees.

It is the responsibility of the each parent to declare their interest in attending or not attending a swim meet. The coach will have ultimate discretion over the events chosen for each swimmer.

Other than during the actual swim meet; parents/guardians are responsible for their child. While it is strongly recommended that the swimmer stay on deck for the duration of the swim meet, if during the meet a swimmer visits their parent/guardian in the bleachers, it is the parent/guardian responsibility to insure the swimmer is back on the pool deck with the coach to swim their next race.

Swim Meet Travel Policy

It is the responsibility of the swimmers parent/guardian to provide transportation to and from swim meets, hotel stay if deemed necessary, food & drinks, a warm-up outfit and shoes, and other needed swimming gear (towel, goggles, team cap). If you make arrangements with another swim family that is fine, but it is ultimately the parent/guardian responsibility.

Parents/guardian may attend non-chosen swim meets by the Jaws Swim Club, however, there will be no Jaws Coach attending these meets. Please work with the head coach if you desire to attend a non-chosen swim meet. The head coach will inform a coach from another team the swimmers need for warm-up supervision as this is required by USA Swimming. The parent/guardian will be responsible for costs associated with the meet.

Preparing for a swim meet

Attending a swim meet is very exciting but can cause a bit of anxiety for anyone. To help your child calm their nerves make sure they have all the proper gear with them. Here is a list of suggested gear:

- Team swim suit
- 2 pairs of goggles
- 2 team swim caps
- 2 towels
- Reusable water bottle/sport drink/fruit juice and nutritional snacks. (No soda, candy, or junk food.)
- Warm-up clothes to put over their swim suit between races (preferably Jamestown Jaws Swim Club apparel) and shoes (crocs, tennis shoes, etc.)
- Energy, enthusiasm, and team spirit!

Swimmers will warm-up prior to the meet and Jamestown Jaws will warm-up as a team. Encourage your child to stay with the coach and to ask the coach when/if there's a good time to visit you in the stands. Most competition pools in North Dakota are set-up with the spectators seating above the pool for parents. Per USA Swimming rules/regulations, parents are not allowed on the pool deck, unless you are a coach, official, timer, or other volunteer personnel, and credentialed to be on the pool deck. This is for athlete safety, pool liability, and a great reason for parents to become involved in the club and volunteer for meets or officiating.

When you arrive at the swim meet, there usually is no cost of admission, but there are programs available for purchase. This program is vital in determining when, and in what races, your child will be swimming.

There are a lot of rules swimmers need to follow during their races at swim meets. Don't be discouraged if your swimmer is disqualified in an event for doing something wrong. Parents and swimmers are encouraged to visit with the coach about any disqualifications.

Parent/Guardian's Role

As the parent/guardian of a competitive swimmer, your main responsibility is to provide a caring and supportive environment for your athlete, the coaching staff and entire team. This support will encourage your child to feel good about his or her interest in competitive swimming. Show your support by ensuring your swimmer's attendance at practices and swim meets.

Parents/guardians are not participants on their child's team but contribute to the success experienced by the swimmer and his or her team. Parents/guardians serve as role models, and children frequently emulate their attitudes. Strive to be a positive role model. Most important, show good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials and other teams.

Bullying/misconduct Policy

Bullying and other misconduct will not be tolerated by Jamestown Jaws Swim Club. To report bullying/misconduct follow this action plan.

- Talk to your parents
- Talk to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual
- Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress. 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 he/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).

Locker Room Policy

The following guidelines are designed to maintain personal privacy as well as to reduce the risk of misconduct in the locker rooms and changing area. We practice at the Jamestown High School pool.

There is a changing area that is shared with the general public. As such, there are likely to be people who are not associated with Jaws Swim Club in the changing area around the time of practice.

Coaches and staff make every effort to recognize when an athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, we will check on the athletes/ whereabouts.

We discourage parents from entering locker rooms and changing areas unless it is truly necessary. In those instance, it should on be a same-sex parent. If this is necessary, parents should let the coach know about this in advance.

If an athlete needs assistance with his or her uniform or gear (for example, a child under the age of eight), or an athlete's disability warrants assistance, then we ask that parents let the coach know beforehand that he or she will be helping the athlete.

Use of cell phone and other mobile recording devices

Cell phones and other mobile devices with recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras increase the risk for different forms of misconduct in locker rooms and changing areas. The USA Swimming Athlete Protection Policies prohibit the use of such devices in the locker room or other changing area: **305.3** Use of audio or visual recording devices, including a cell phone camera, is not allowed in changing areas, rest rooms or locker rooms.

Role of Jaws Board of Directors

The Jamestown Jaws Board of Directors manages the day-to-day administrative operations of the team. According to our By-Laws are not compensated for their time spent working on the day-to-day operations of the club. The Jaws Board of Directors is required to have a minimum of 5 members, but no more than 10 members holding office for 1 year. All Jaws Parent Board members must be registered with USA Swimming as a non-athlete (every year), conduct a back ground check (every 2 years) and complete the Athlete Protection Training (every 2 years). Any costs associated with these requirements will be reimbursed by Jamestown Jaws Swim Club.

Jaws Swim Club Officials

Volunteers that officiate at a swim meet will have one child's swim meet fee waived. Officials are required to be present at team chosen swim meets where at least 10 swimmers have registered for the competition. The process to becoming an official is described on the USA Swimming website <https://www.usaswimming.org/articles-landing-page/2017/02/12/how-to-become-an-official>. An official must be registered with USA Swimming as a non-athlete (every year), conduct a back ground check (every 2 years), complete the Athlete Protection Training (every 2 years) and purchase a NDLSO officiating polo. Any costs associated with these requirements will be reimbursed by Jamestown Jaws Swim Team. The first 3 requirements must be completed prior to apprenticing for the 4th time. The NDLSO officiating polo needs to be purchased prior to being an official at the first meet.

Lost & Found

You are strongly encouraged to label all of your swimmer's equipment. Labeled equipment found at practice can easily be returned to the swimmer. Unlabeled equipment found around the pool deck will be placed in the pool office. It will be kept for 30 days, and then if not claimed, donated to a local charity. Swimmers should keep all personal belongings on the pool deck and not in the locker room during practice sessions. The locker rooms can be used by others groups. The club is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Fundraising

Jamestown Jaws Swim Club is a parent run organization. In order to rent the pool, pay our coaches and purchase and maintain our equipment we must engage in fundraising. Our major fundraising event is hosting a swim meet. Please consider becoming an official to help us host more swim meets at our home pool! All parents are required to volunteer in some capacity. In addition to hosting swim meet(s), other fundraising opportunities will come available, we need all families to participate.

Club Communication

Web site

Jamestown Jaws Swim Club primary methods of communication are e-mail and the club website, www.jamestownjaws.com. The website includes practice calendars, news and events. The site is updated regularly. Please check for new and updated information.

Jamestown Jaws Swim Club encourages open communication. Please feel free to email coaches or board members at jawsswimteam@gmail.com.

Electronic Communication Policy

PURPOSE

The Jamestown Jaws Swim Club 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 the Club acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, the Club 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 Athlete Protection.

For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drugs or alcohol use;
 - sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity
 - the adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
 - inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- Note: Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

www.usaswimming.org/protect

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?"

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is **T**ransparent, **A**ccessible and **P**rofessional.

Transparent: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club's records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

Professional: All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

FACEBOOK, MYSPACE, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a "friend." A coach should not accept any "friend" request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "private message" each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "instant message" each other through Facebook chat or other IM method.

The Club has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can "friend" for information and updates on team-related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to "private" to prevent athletes from accessing the coach's personal information.

TWITTER

Coaches are not permitted to follow athletes on Twitter. Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on Twitter. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "direct message" each other through Twitter. Alternative Option: Coaches and athletes may follow each other on Twitter. Coaches cannot retweet an athlete message post. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "direct message" each other through Twitter.

TEXTING

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 9pm. Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

EMAIL

Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 7am and 9pm. When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

Safety and Behavior

The Jamestown Jaws Parent Board reserves the right to terminate the membership of any individual whose behavior places Jaws in an unfavorable light or jeopardizes our participation in any pool use or sporting event. Respect parents, coaches, teammates, officials, and swimmers from other teams. All

swimmers are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and act as appropriate ambassadors for the club at practice and swim meets. They should act as role models for other swimmers at all times, take responsibility for words and actions, successes and failures. Always do your best, whether practicing or competing.

By signing below the athlete (s) and parent/guardian have read the Jaws Parent Handbook, you also give Jaws permission to publish photos of the athlete unless stated otherwise.

Athlete signature _____

Parent/Guardian signature _____

If your family has more than 1 athlete swimming for Jaws they may all sign this single form in the space provided.

(If you're unable to print this page, extras will be available at registration.)