



THE CAPITOL SEA DEVILS

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

FOR PARENTS & SWIMMERS

COMPETITIVE SWIM PROGRAMS

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www.seadevils.org



THE CAPITOL SEA DEVILS SWIM TEAM

Who We Are: The Capitol Sea Devils is a non-profit corporation founded in 1967 by Ms. Jane Stafford, who at that time was a nationally recognized swim coach. Her goal was to provide swimming instruction and competition opportunities to swimmers of all ages and abilities. Over the intervening forty plus years, The Capitol Sea Devils (TCSD) has grown to over 600 swimmers. Our swimmers have consistently proven themselves to be among the best in the nation, reaching the highest levels of age group, junior, and senior national competition. Many of our swimmers have gone on to outstanding swimming and academic careers in colleges and universities throughout the country. TCSD is governed by a Board of Directors, each member volunteering time and talent to provide policy guidance, financial accounting, and quality oversight to help the coaching staff execute the following mission statement:

Our Mission: The mission of The Capitol Sea Devils (TCSD) is to provide excellence in professional coaching and programs that helps swimmers achieve their maximum potential and strengthen their work ethic, self-esteem and respect for others. TCSD offers a series of graduated programs that provide quality instruction and training to all our swimmers. Our coaches focus attention on stroke mechanics, conditioning, and overall physical development. Competition affords the swimmers a major, but not exclusive, measurement of their progress and development.

As we recognize that our programs are only as good as our coaches, TCSD hires proven, talented, and highly motivated coaches who have been evaluated independently as to their knowledge of all facets of the sport. Most importantly, they have demonstrated an outstanding ability to communicate our philosophy as well as their knowledge and motivation to swimmers of all ages and abilities.

TCSD is committed to each of its swimmers. This commitment is based on the explicit recognition that there is a triangular relationship of expectations and commitment among swimmers, parents, and coaches. TCSD expects swimmers to demonstrate their commitment to training and to the team by attending practice on a regular basis, by supporting their teammates on deck and in the water, and by conducting themselves in a responsible manner at all times. TCSD encourages parents to support their swimmers and the team by contributing their time to assist with various swimming and social activities. Swimmers and parents may, in turn, expect TCSD to provide the highest caliber of instruction in a well-organized, safe, and friendly environment. *The Capitol Sea Devils recognize that swimming is but one part of a young person's academic, social, and athletic development.* TCSD views every one of its swimmers as a scholar-athlete and actively encourages and rewards the academic success of each. Finally, TCSD endeavors to afford each swimmer and his/her parent(s) the maximum amount of fun with the minimum amount of hassle.

THE CAPITOL SEA DEVILS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following policies and procedures have been developed to clarify the relationship among TCSD, our swimmers, and our parents and to establish clear, realistic expectations on the part of all. Our policies and procedures have been refined by experience and the input of swimmers, coaches, and parents. The most essential part of the relationship among TCSD, our swimmers, and our parents is a thorough knowledge of and adherence to these policies and procedures



I. COMMUNICATIONS

POLICY: Clear, consistent, and timely communication of useful information is a major goal of TCSD. For this reason we have developed a number of vehicles to facilitate communications.

PROCEDURES: Throughout the swimming season parents will receive and will have occasion to use the following communications vehicles. Additionally, we encourage discussion of your swimmer's progress with the coach at appropriate times, generally after practice. Our coaches do have outside jobs that are their primary employment. As a rule, please allow your coach 24 hours to respond to emails sent during the day as many do not have access to their personal emails during their workday.

- A. Website - www.seadevils.org** - The website is our principal vehicle for communication of upcoming meets, meet results, practice schedules, and other information. Our website is updated regularly and is a good resource for information.
- B. Social Media:** We can be found on the following social media channels:
Facebook: facebook.com/seadevilswimming; Twitter: @seadevilswim; and Instagram: seadevilswim.
- C. Pool Bulletin Boards** - Each pool has a bulletin board maintained by the pool coach that presents important information about meets and other team activities. Parents should check this board at least once a week. *Note: Meet information and entry deadlines are posted on these bulletin boards and should be checked by parents!*
- D. Pool Coaches** - The pool coach is responsible for all TCSD programs offered at that pool. He/she supervises other coaches and serves as the principal point of contact for parents. TCSD pool coaches are:
- Holton Arms: Peter Karl peterkarl@seadevils.org
 - St. Albans: Ian Handerhan ianhanderhan@seadevils.org
 - South Run: Jared Diallo coachjared18@gmail.com
 - Bender JCC of Greater Washington (Rockville, MD) TBD
- E. Back to Pool Sessions** - Important informational meetings are held during the first month of practice and include presentations by coaches and board members. These meetings also provide an excellent opportunity for parents to ask questions and meet other families who will be swimming at that pool. Attendance is strongly encouraged.
- F. Swimmers/Parents Seminars** - Throughout the swim season TCSD occasionally conducts educational seminars on various subjects related to swimming. Announcements of these seminars are emailed to parents, posted on the website, pool bulletin boards and are distributed to swimmers at practice.



II. PARTICIPATION

POLICY: Participation with TCSD involves payment of fees on a timely basis, attending practice, paying attention to the coach's instructions, and participating in the competitions offered throughout the swimming season. As athletes committed to the sport of swimming, all TCSD swimmers are expected to comport themselves appropriately at practice, swim meets, and social events. At the base of this expectation is an underlying notion of *respect*. As TCSD swimmers:

- we **respect** our fellow swimmers' commitment to the sport and their team, regardless of an individual's swimming ability;
- we **respect** the professional skills of our coaches that have been refined over years of experience as well as their individual dedication to each of us as swimmers, scholars, and people;
- we **respect** our parents, who provide the underlying support of all of our athletic, academic, social, and moral development;
- we **respect** the officials, managers, and all those who organize and oversee our competitive programs; and
- we **respect** the facilities where we train and compete.

This concept of respect -- for one another, for our coaches, for our parents, for our facilities -- forms the basis for our adherence to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, which is appended to these policies and procedures. TCSD expects each of its swimmers to adhere to the Code of Conduct. Furthermore, a serious breach of this concept of respect may result in warnings, suspension, or dismissal from the team. ***TCSD must hold the parent(s) responsible for the conduct and behavior of his/her children.***

PROCEDURES: The following procedures are in effect to ensure that all TCSD participants are able to benefit from their commitment to swimming to the maximum extent of their ability.

- A. Emergency Medical Form** – Emergency contact/medical information is collected as part of the online registration process. However, a separate form may be required from parents/guardians at certain facilities and will be kept on file by TCSD prior to the start of the program. This form will be resubmitted annually.
- B. Code of Conduct** – Parents/guardians also complete Parent Code of Conduct forms as part of the online registration process. A copy of the TCSD policy and USA Swimming's [Code of Conduct](#) policy will be distributed via email prior to the beginning of the season. Coaches will review the policy with swimmers at the start of the season. Parents are also responsible for reviewing the details of both policies with their swimmers prior to the start of the season.
- C. Travel Code of Conduct** - Swimmers will sign and submit a code of conduct form for each travel meet prior to the beginning of the trip.
- D. Counseling** - A coach will counsel a swimmer who manifests a lack of understanding of our commitment to respect. If, in the judgment of the coach, the behavior represents a serious lack of respect for another swimmer, coach, official, other adult, or facility, that swimmer's participation in the practice or meet may be terminated. In such a case, the swimmer's parent(s) will be notified of the circumstances in writing. Such notification may include a warning that further manifestations of such behavior may result in suspension or dismissal from the team.



- E. Suspension** - On rare occasions a TCSD swimmer may be required to re-examine his or her commitment to the sport and the team by being suspended temporarily from participation in swim practices, swim meets, and all other activities sponsored by the team. The circumstances warranting such a suspension will generally involve a serious breach of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct or these policies and procedures. A coach may recommend suspension to the Board of Directors, which will investigate and evaluate the event, reach a decision, and inform the swimmer's parent(s) verbally and in writing in a timely manner. ***In the event of suspension from the team, no refund of fees paid will be made.***
- F. Dismissal** - A swimmer may be directed to terminate his or her affiliation with TCSD for the remainder of the swimming season for an exceptionally serious breach or series of breaches of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct or these policies and procedures. A coach may recommend the dismissal of a swimmer to the Board of Directors, who will investigate and evaluate the event, reach a decision, and inform the swimmer's parent(s) verbally and in writing in a timely manner. ***In the event of dismissal from the team, no refund of fees paid will be made.***

III. PRACTICE

POLICY: Your swimmer's enrollment in a TCSD program means that you and your swimmer have made a commitment to attend the number of practices scheduled for that program each week. Attendance at those practices is expected. Space in the pool is made available for your swimmer for those times. In addition, the coaches have planned a progressive training schedule based on this commitment. We fully realize that, from time to time, the demands of school, illness, or other commitments may prevent a swimmer from meeting a practice commitment. Please let the coach know ahead of time when your child will be absent from two or more consecutive practices. ***We regret that we are unable to provide make-up practices.***

As a matter of policy, no TCSD coach will, under any circumstance, provide transportation for a swimmer to or from any practice or swim meet. The only exception to this policy will be a scheduled out-of-town swim meet for which TCSD makes all necessary arrangements, rents vehicles, provides chaperones, and charges additional fees accordingly.

PROCEDURES: The practice schedule for each TCSD program is posted at each pool and is on the website. Information regarding changes will be available on the website, the pool bulletin boards, and, if possible, distributed via email directly from the coach or via the mass email system.

- A. Arrival At and Pick-Up From Practice** - Try to arrive at practice early enough so that your swimmer can be properly attired, on the deck, and ready to begin the practice session on time. For the safety and security of your child, it is imperative that each swimmer be picked up promptly after practice. Coaches have other commitments and cannot remain more than 15 minutes after practice.
- B. Parking** - Please observe the parking regulations at each pool and be considerate of others using these facilities.
- **Holton Arms:** Use only the lot on the near side of the tennis courts. Do not park along the road by the hockey field.
 - **St. Albans:** The driveway is not accessible to TCSD families. Specific information for dropping off and picking up swimmers will be given to St. Albans families.
 - **South Run Rec Centers:** Park in designated lots adjacent to the facilities.
 - **JCC of Rockville, MD:** parking is available in the facility's lots.

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C. **Inclement Weather** - TCSD will not hold practice when the public schools of the jurisdiction identified for each pool are closed or dismissed early for bad weather. When weather conditions worsen late in the day or on weekends and the jurisdiction cancels afternoon, evening or weekend activities, we will not hold practices.

- **Holton Arms:** Check the Holton Arms website: <http://www.holton-arms.edu/>
- **St. Albans:** Call the pool weather line: 202-537-6462
- **South Run:** As of November 1, 2015, the Park Authority follows **Fairfax County Government closures**. Unless the county closes all county facilities, RECenters and other park facilities will remain open for general use and for classes. For the most immediate information, you can go **Online** at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks to see if South Run is open. Coaches will send out an email as soon as they can if practice is cancelled and the TCSD website will also be updated.
- **JCC:** Check their website or WTOP.com for closures

If school openings are delayed, afternoon practices will be held. Every effort will be made to have current information available on the website. *Use your best judgment in deciding whether to travel to practice during inclement weather. Your safety is more important than any practice.*

D. **Parent Attendance at Practice** - Each pool has an area where parents may wait for their children and observe practice. We are guests of these facilities, which have requested that parents and siblings remain only in these designated areas:

- **Holton Arms:** currently not permitted
- **St. Albans:** bleachers overlooking the pool
- **South Run:** bleachers and mezzanine overlooking the pool
- **JCC of Rockville** – viewing from above the pool/lobby area




ALL OTHER AREAS AT THESE FACILITIES ARE STRICTLY OFF LIMITS! Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

IV. COMPETITION

POLICY: Competition is one of the most important, but not the sole measure, of an individual swimmer's progress and development in the sport. Accordingly, we strongly encourage TCSD swimmers to compete in a variety of meets that are offered throughout the year. TCSD is a registered member club of USA Swimming and its local swim committee, Potomac Valley Swimming (PVS). PVS and its member teams sponsor meets throughout the season for swimmers of all ages and abilities. Notices of each meet in which TCSD swimmers will participate will be posted on our website (www.seadevils.org), sent to parents via email, told to swimmers at practice and posted on pool bulletin boards. The meet schedule (subject to change) is also available at "Back to Pool Nights."

Swimmers are strongly encouraged to participate in those meets TCSD has entered as a team. At least one TCSD coach will be present at each session of these meets to provide support and feedback to all TCSD swimmers participating. There are other meets offered by PVS and member teams throughout the season in which TCSD will not participate as a team.

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The Director of Coaching, on a case by case basis, will determine if a qualified individual swimmer may enter these meets as a “Deck Entry.” Parents and swimmers must recognize in advance that no TCSD coach will be present. Failure to obtain prior approval may result in disciplinary sanctions.

PROCEDURES: The following procedures apply to all swimming competition which TCSD will sponsor or in which TCSD will participate as a team:

- A. TCSD Meets:** TCSD will periodically host another club or clubs for a PVS-sanctioned meet at one of the TCSD pools. Times swum in these meets can then be used as qualifying times in PVS/USA meets.
- B. PVS Meets:**
- **Mini Meets:** Usually for swimmers ages 8 and under.
 - **Open Meets:** For swimmers of all levels, generally 9 and older.
 - **“No Slower than” Meets:** For swimmers who have achieved specific qualifying times.
 - **Qualifier Meets:** For swimmers needing qualifying times to participate in championship meets. Swimmers may not compete in events for which they have already achieved qualifying times.
 - **Championship Meets:** Trials and finals format for swimmers with qualifying times.
- C. Procedures for all TCSD swimmers entering PVS Meets:** PVS has very rigid deadlines for receipt of meet entries for those meets it sponsors. For this reason, we have established our own deadlines for receiving entries from swimmers, after which we must compile and computerize all entries for all pools and submit to the host club one consolidated master entry for the entire TCSD team by the meet entry deadline. The TCSD meet entry deadline will be posted on our website and is posted on each pool bulletin board. The pool coaches will inform you of the procedures for meet entries at each site. *Please note that the entry deadline on the meet announcement is for our consolidated entries as a team. Each location will have a deadline that is in advance of this date.*
- *No entries will be accepted after the deadline indicated by the pool coach and as specified in the meet announcement.*
 - The master team entry will be posted on the website and on pool bulletin boards. *Parents and swimmers are encouraged to check meet entries for accuracy.*

SPECIAL NOTES REGARDING MEET ENTRIES:

- 1. It is the responsibility of parents and swimmers to ensure that the swimmer has been entered by checking their Swim Portal, the TCSD website and pool bulletin boards. Missing an entry deadline will result in either inability to participate in the meet or a “Deck Entry,” which will require payment of a much higher entry fee by the swimmer. TCSD will not pay for deck entry fees for swimmers who have missed the entry deadline.**
- 2. No TCSD coach will enter any swimmer in any meet without proper and prior consultation with that swimmer or parent of that swimmer.**



3. Parents may not “deck enter” a swimmer in a meet without prior approval from the Director of Coaching.
4. No Deck Entries are permitted for championship meets or at the TCSD Swim & Rock meet.

V. TEAM TRAVEL

POLICY: Swimmers who meet progressively more demanding time standards will be invited to represent PVS and TCSD at various levels of zone and national competition, culminating with the U.S. National Swimming Championships. Participation in travel competition represents a significant achievement of a swimmer’s personal goals.

TCSD routinely participates in meets sponsored by other USA local swim committees. Past trips have included: State College, PA; Rutgers University; the U.S. Naval Academy; Richmond, VA; and Tampa, FL. Team travel is one of the wonderful opportunities that participation on a sports team offers. Team travel is a fantastic learning experience in many ways: it fosters team spirit, teaches responsibility and how to work together as part of a group, expands one’s knowledge of how to compete and to perform in a new environment, and is a tangible reward for the swimmers who have made a commitment to the sport. It is highly recommended that all swimmers who wish to participate in team travel do so by experiencing the entire activity (e.g., travel with the team, stay in the team rooms, and attend the team meals and team social activities).

During team travel TCSD expects each of its swimmers to adhere to *USA Swimming's Code of Conduct*, which is appended to this document. A serious breach of discipline may result in warnings, suspension or dismissal from the team, and/or the swimmer being dismissed from the meet and sent home. ***TCSD must hold parents responsible for the conduct and behavior of their children.*** All TCSD swimmers attending out-of-town swim meets sponsored by The Capitol Sea Devils must complete the *The Capitol Sea Devils Code of Conduct* whereby they agree to adhere to the tenants of the *USA Swimming's Code of Conduct*.

PROCEDURES: The following procedures apply to all swimming competition to which TCSD swimmers travel:

- A. **Travel Sponsored by Potomac Valley Swimming** - If a TCSD swimmer violates the USA Swimming Code of Conduct while participating in a PVS-sponsored travel meet, that swimmer may be sent home immediately. The expense for such travel home shall be the responsibility of the swimmer’s parents.
- B. **Travel Sponsored by The Capitol Sea Devils** - If a TCSD swimmer violates the USA Swimming Code of Conduct or acts in a manner deemed inappropriate by the coaching staff or team managers, that swimmer shall be disciplined. Disciplinary action may include sending the swimmer home immediately at the parents’ expense. In the case of team travel where TCSD has contributed any portion of the meet expense, violation of the signed Code of Conduct will result in the swimmer’s parents bearing the entire cost associated with all meet and travel expenses.

Payment of travel expenses: All fees for team travel must be paid prior to departure. Coaches are unable to allow swimmers who have not submitted all required paperwork and full payment to participate. There are normally two payment options for team-sponsored travel meets:

1. Pay the fee to experience the entire trip as outlined in the meet announcement/sign up form. This normally includes transportation, meet fees, and hotel arrangements.
2. Pay a fee for TCSD to handle meet entries only.

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If option 2 is selected, the swimmer will not have the opportunity to travel with the team or attend any team meals or team social activities. Under special circumstances, a swimmer who enters under option 1, but cannot participate in all activities, can appeal for an adjustment. This appeal will only be considered when made in writing to the travel coordinator coach as well as to the Board of Directors and only after all travel expenses are have been met.

- C. **Violations During Travel** - The TCSD Board of Directors will review any violations of the Code of Conduct. Disciplinary action may include warnings, suspension, restriction, or dismissal from the team.

VI. PARENT PARTICIPATION

POLICY: Swimming is an athletic adventure for both swimmers and parents. While some sports only require the parent to watch supportively from the sidelines or bleachers, competitive swimming requires enormous volunteer efforts to be successful. Each meet requires a minimum of thirty judges, timers, computer operators, ribbon writers, and others. TCSD needs your help to ensure a successful competitive swimming program that is also fun for our swimmers.

PROCEDURES: Opportunities for parent participation include:

- A. **Certified Officials:** TCSD needs certified deck officials - referees, starters, stroke and turn judges, and computer operators - to help run our meets as well as PVS meets. PVS provides the necessary training and certification. If you and your child plan on a serious swimming commitment, becoming an official is both a rewarding and supportive way of getting as close to the competition as possible without getting totally wet. We also offer an incentive program for our Officials. For more information, visit our website and click on "Officials Information" under the "About Us" tab.
- B. **Timers:** Each swimmer, parent, and coach is vitally interested in the time a swimmer has achieved in an event. It takes two or more timers per lane to run a meet. PVS requires all clubs to provide timers in proportion to the number of swimmers from the club entered in a meet. Plan to time at the meet sessions when your swimmer will be competing and indicate your availability when your swimmer enters a PVS meet. Most meets will have an online volunteer sign-up that will be distributed with the meet announcement. If we all do this, TCSD will be able to fulfill its obligations and meets will run without delays to find timers at the start of each session.
- C. **Other Volunteers:** Administrative support for TCSD meets is always needed. We encourage your participation as ribbon writers, runners, hospitality helpers, deck marshals, and all of the other tasks necessary to run a swim meet. Your involvement and participation are a part of the fun of competitive swimming for your swimmer. Please indicate your willingness to help by signing up to volunteer. Sign-ups for TCSD meets will be available in your [Swim Portal](#).

VII. SOCIAL FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

POLICY: We are more than just a swim team and we like to have fun. Social events are scheduled throughout the year so swimmers and parents from all pools and programs may get to know one another and enjoy our common bond.

PROCEDURES: TCSD activities planned for this season include:

- A. **End-of-Year Awards Picnic:** Held at the end of the season on the Saturday before Mother's Day, this event includes a pizza party, awards, and fun for swimmers and families. Watch for a flyer!
- B. **Pool Events:** Held at the individual sites. Your pool coach will provide details.

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Special Note - Parent Volunteers are needed to help coordinate each of these activities. Thank you for your help!

VIII. FEES AND EXPENSES

POLICY: We expect all fees to be paid at the beginning of the season, unless other payment arrangements have been made and approved in advance. If fees are not paid promptly, a swimmer's participation with the team may be suspended until full payment is made. ***NO SWIMMER WILL BE PERMITTED TO ATTEND PRACTICE UNTIL ALL FEES HAVE BEEN PAID.***

PROCEDURES: The following procedures are in effect for payment of fees during the current swimming season.

- A. Fees:** The fees for the current season will be assessed on an annual basis. The fee is based on the type of program selected for each swimmer and will include registration, insurance, and local meet entry fees. At registration, each swimmer will be required to pay a non-refundable deposit, which will be credited towards the program fee. Swimmers joining the team *after* the season has started must make financial arrangements with the Director of Operations.
- B. Refunds:** Refunds will be considered only when a request to withdraw is made in writing to the Director of Operations. Refunds will be made as follows: 80% within the first two weeks of the season and 50% within the first four weeks of the season. ***NO REFUNDS WILL BE MADE AFTER THIS TIME.*** Fees cannot be prorated. Pool time and coaching staff have been scheduled based on your commitment to a particular program. Pool rental and salaries must be paid regardless of your swimmer's ability to meet her/his practice commitment. In the event of suspension or dismissal from the team, no refunds will be made.
- C. Scholarships:** Scholarship assistance to reduce part of the costs of participation may be available upon written request directed to the Director of Operations for evaluation by the Board of Directors.
- D. "No Swim" or "Black-Out" Dates:** These refer to days when the pools that we rent will not be available for swim practice. These dates are part of the rental agreement with our training sites. All "No Swim" and "Black-Out" dates are factored into the overall registration cost and are not subject to a refund.

IX. TEAM UNIFORMS AND EQUIPMENT

POLICY: TCSD requires each swimmer who participates in meets to wear a TCSD suit, a TCSD team shirt and a TCSD swim cap. This practice facilitates ready identification of TCSD swimmers and contributes to team spirit. Other equipment, such as hand paddles, fins, training suits, and stretch cords may be required for swimmers in certain practice groups. Your program coach will have more information as to the specific equipment required for their training group.

PROCEDURES: Team suits, shirts for swimmers and parents, personalized swim caps, swim bags, parkas, warm-ups, and other team equipment, logoed with the TCSD insignia, are available from our team supplier, Sport Fair (www.sportfairusa.com). All swimmers will be outfitted with a TCSD team shirt and a TCSD swim cap at the beginning of the season. Additional purchases can also be made through our online team store, which will be available throughout the season.