



2026/2027 FALCONS PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK



A MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD COACH



ABOUT SUZANNE

Suzanne Richardson began swimming in Bloomington-Normal at age 3 and went on to rank third in the world in the women's 50-meter freestyle. She was a state champion in high school, a scholarship athlete at Illinois State University, and later represented Brazil in the 2000 Sydney Olympics, becoming a national and South American record holder. After retiring from competition, Suzanne spent 20 years coaching, mentoring state and national champions—including a Paralympian. She's now excited to bring her experience to the YMCA swim program and inspire the next generation.

Dear Falcon Families,

Welcome to the **2026–2027 Falcons Swim Season!** We are so grateful that you've chosen the YMCA and entrusted us with your swimmer's journey. Our team has been hard at work creating a **safe, engaging, welcoming, and inclusive environment** where every athlete can learn, grow, and thrive—in the pool and beyond.

As your Head Coach, I am truly excited to lead this program and to partner with you in making this season one to remember. My coaching philosophy centers on **support, inclusion, and encouragement**. Every swimmer deserves to feel valued and inspired. While celebrating victories in the pool is always exciting, my ultimate goal is to help your athlete:

Develop skills and techniques that will serve them for life.
Build confidence and character through teamwork and perseverance.
Discover joy in the sport of swimming and the community that comes with it.

We believe parents and families are an essential part of the Falcons experience. I invite you to be involved throughout the season, and I welcome open communication at any time. Please don't hesitate to reach me at suzanner@bnymca.org or **1-309-310-6578** with any questions, ideas, or concerns.

I cannot wait to meet you, cheer on our athletes, and work together to make this season one filled with growth, achievement, and plenty of fun.

Go Falcons!

Suzanne Richardson
Falcons Head Coach
suzanner@bnymca.org
1.309.310.6578

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ABOUT THE FALCONS SWIM TEAM

Welcome to the Bloomington-Normal YMCA Falcon Swim Team. Our organization is committed to excellence in competitive and recreational aquatics. By joining our team, you embark on a journey of self-improvement, enjoyment, success, and building the powerful skills needed to accomplish any goal in life. This handbook contains valuable information for both swimmers and parents.

Families are responsible for reading all of the information provided.

OUR MISSION

To put Christian principles into practice through programs, services, and relationships that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

OUR VISION

A healthy community where everyone is thriving.



OUR CORE VALUES & PROGRAM OBJECTIVE



CARING



HONESTY



RESPECT



RESPONSIBILITY

It is our commitment to these values and our mission that helps better each child that attends the programs the YMCA has to offer. The Falcons Swim Team's objective is to inspire and enable its members to achieve excellence in swimming and in life. We strive to promote the sport of swimming by creating a safe and positive environment and providing a program and services for our members. Falcons create a focus on inspiring athletes to build confidence and discipline in a respectful and inclusive environment, fostering personal growth and community safety while also working to achieve their Olympic dreams and promoting the values of sport.

PROGRAM GOALS

1. Provide our young athletes with the best instruction and training in swimming and life skills.
2. Provide this instruction in a fun, relaxed, and positive atmosphere.
3. Instill the core YMCA values of caring, honesty, responsibility, and respect.

TEAM PHILOSOPHY

To develop the character traits, technical skills, and intense desire necessary for maximum realization of each individual's potential. We will always encourage anyone to participate regardless of background or experience.

CLUB STRUCTURE & ORGANIZATION

We're proud to be part of the Bloomington-Normal YMCA, a nonprofit organization committed to youth development and healthy living. Our program follows the guidelines set by both YMCA Swimming and USA Swimming, giving our athletes access to a wide range of competitive opportunities—from beginner dual meets to national-level events.

The team is led by our Head Coach, who oversees everything from season planning to coach development. Assistant Coaches support specific training groups, and all billing and registrations are handled by the Head Coach and Senior Aquatics Director.

When you join the Falcons, you're part of two amazing swim communities—YMCA Swimming and USA Swimming (USAS). This dual membership lets us offer meets and experiences for every level of swimmer, from short, half-day events to multi-day competitions across the country.

Families are the heart of our team. We rely on parent volunteers to help run meets, build team spirit, and support our swimmers. Don't worry—we'll guide you through everything! We host a parent meeting each fall and provide resources like a glossary of swim terms to help you feel confident and informed.

By getting involved, you're not just supporting your child—you're helping the entire Falcon team thrive.

YMCA membership is required to join the Falcons Swim Team.



MODE OF OPERATION

COMMUNICATION

Our main source of communication is through the team website:
<https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/iswbny/page/home>

Secondly, we email all notices, changes, meet sign-up reminders, and other information to all registered team members on our email list. If you are not receiving team emails, please notify the Head Coach at suzanner@bnymca.org

PRACTICE LOCATION



Bloomington-Normal YMCA

202 St. Joseph Dr. Bloomington, IL

YMCA Phone Number: 309-827-6233

PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

Be respectful to your teammates, coaches, facility staff, and other parents.

We practice to improve. We strive to help our athletes improve physically, mentally, and emotionally. Falcon provides this in a fun and relaxed atmosphere; however, our staff wants to remind all participants that a big part of having fun is finding success. If there is excessive horseplay or rambunctious behavior, it prevents others from learning and improving. Please refer to the Discipline Policy section for more information.

Try to keep your practices consistent.

In order to improve athletes' skills and stamina, consistency in attending practices is important. While some swimmers might gain results in the short term, sporadic attendance will hinder long-term growth and improvement. Consistent practice attendance is very important, especially for the competitive swimmer.

Progressing as a group will also make the practices more efficient and enjoyable for all participants. See Group Guidelines for specific group recommendations on frequency of practice.

Be on time.

Athletes should arrive about 10 minutes before the practice session begins so they can start on time. This means that before the practice start time, they should have their equipment ready; their suits, caps, and goggles on; and be ready to commence warm-ups per the coach's instructions. If you are going to be more than 15 minutes late, it is recommended that you not attend. Depending on what the main theme of the practice is, latecomers might miss all of the warm-up session and then risk injury by jumping right in on a main set without properly warming up. If you are late, ask the coach if it is okay to enter practice at that time. Please do not ask the coach if you can warm up separately and then join the practice. We are very limited on pool time, and trying to change practice and structure to accommodate that one swimmer is not appropriate.

Always give your best effort.

Practices will challenge athletes both physically and mentally. Swimmers will be asked to push themselves—sometimes with speed, sometimes with focus and control. Success comes from listening, giving full effort, and aiming to improve technique, mindset, fitness, and teamwork.

Everyone progresses at their own pace. We encourage athletes and parents to focus only on what they can control: work hard, work smart, and support personal growth over comparison.

PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS CONTINUED

Parents, please limit your contact with the coach(s) during practice.

Parents are welcome to watch practice from the viewing area but are not allowed on the pool deck for safety reasons. To avoid distractions, please wait until before or after practice to speak with coaches. During practice, coaches must focus fully on athlete safety, instruction, and motivation—thank you for respecting their time and responsibilities.

Parents, please limit your contact with your swimmer during practice.

To avoid distractions, parents should limit contact with swimmers during practice. Even well-meaning gestures—like giving instructions, timing, or refilling water bottles—can disrupt focus and coaching.

Parents play a vital role in supporting both athletes and coaches. For ways to get involved, see the Parent Involvement section.

Be respectful to others.

In and out of the pool, Falcon members should always demonstrate good sportsmanship and manners. In the pool, coach (es)coaches have specific guidelines for each group.

Here are some lane etiquette tips to keep in mind:

- When circle swimming, stay on your side of the lane.
- Help make room for everyone's equipment at the end of the pool.
- If your feet are touched, move over and let the swimmer pass on your left side.
- Never push off the wall right in front of another swimmer.
- Bring your water bottle. Sharing could promote the spread of illnesses.
- Be encouraging. Never ask someone to swim slowly because you don't want to go faster.
- Be respectful of our and others' facilities.

Pool time is tough to come by and is a privilege. We will not be welcomed back if we cannot abide by their rules and listen to the staff. Please leave locker rooms clean, pick up your belongings, put all equipment away, and pick up any trash before leaving any facility we use.

PLEASE NOTE:



If a practice session must be temporarily changed or canceled, you will receive an email from the Head Coach, or the website will be updated with the announcements or revisions. Or you can call the Bloomington-Normal YMCA at (309)827-6233

INDIVIDUAL GOALS

All athletes, regardless of level, are encouraged to set personal goals and work toward them. Coaches will help guide this process at the start of each season, focusing on goals swimmers can control—like improving technique or effort in practice—not outcomes like winning or beating others. We want these goals to come from the swimmers themselves, so please allow coaches to lead these conversations. It's a valuable skill that extends far beyond the pool.

GROUP GUIDELINES

Coaches will work together to assign swimmers to their current group. Parents and/or guardians and the athlete are welcome to discuss the recommendation with the coaches, but the Head Coach will make the final decision.

The Five Groups for Falcons are described as follows:

WHITE

This is our first swim team group for the novice swimmer who can swim all four competitive strokes at 25 yards each and wishes to gain endurance and skill to compete. White group is designed to build endurance and refine stroke technique. This is our developmental group for the beginning competitive swimmer who can swim 100 yards of freestyle, 50 yards of breaststroke, backstroke, and butterfly, and has basic knowledge of a start and flipturn. A great deal of individualized instruction occurs in the short practices. Group Goals: Building the foundation of solid technique, working on circle swimming, bilateral breathing, body awareness, general stroke technique, streamlining, and introductions to starts and turns.

Practice Times

Monday - Friday | 4pm - 5pm | 2-3 practices recommended

Recommended Equipment

Swim Fins, Kickboard, Goggles, Cap, Racing Suit and Pull Buoy

ORANGE

Swimmers should be able to legally swim 300 freestyle and 100 IM and have mastered the basic Orange-level stroke drills. They should understand streamlining, reading a pace clock, and send-offs. Goals include underwater fly kicks, breaststroke pullouts, and building on Orange techniques.

This level requires increased stamina as swimmers work toward a 500 free, 200 IM, and beyond.

Swimmers will refine technique and advanced drills, improve starts and turns, learn to read heat sheets and get to the block independently, practice goal setting and mental skills, and complete longer aerobic sets. The group prepares swimmers for advanced endurance and competition.

Practice Times

Monday - Friday | 5pm - 6:30pm | 4-5 practices recommended

Recommended Equipment

Swim Fins, Kickboard, Goggles, Cap and Racing Suit

BLACK

This is an advanced group that introduces more endurance and competitive opportunities. All White and Orange skills must be mastered. Coaches will discuss moving to this group with Athlete when the time is right. Must be on time and stay duration of each practice.

Practice Times

Monday - Friday | 5pm - 7pm | 4-5 practices recommended

Required Equipment:

Swim Fins, Kickboard, Goggles, Cap, Racing Suit and Pull Buoy, Mesh Bag, and Snorkel.

Recommended Equipment: paddles (discuss with coach. not all swimmers will use paddles).



Swimmers typically spend 1-3 seasons in each group. Some may move up more quickly in one phase and slower in another. Both are normal. All Athletes progress at their own pace.

White: 1-2 Seasons | Orange: 2-4 Seasons | Black: Multiple seasons/years into higher levels and beyond

GROUP PLACEMENT & ADVANCEMENT GUIDELINES

WONDERING WHY YOUR SWIMMER IS NOT IN A HIGHER GROUP?

It is natural for swimmers and families to wonder about group progression and ask, “Why hasn’t my swimmer moved up yet?” Advancement with the Bloomington-Normal YMCA Falcons Swim Team is holistic. Being ready for a higher group extends beyond pure speed or talent; it requires readiness across technique, physical maturity, mental resilience, and training habits.

Our goal is not to advance swimmers as rapidly as possible, but to place them where they can be appropriately challenged, stay healthy, build confidence, and foster a lifelong love for swimming.

KEY FACTORS IN PROGRESSION

Some common reasons a swimmer may remain in their current group include:

- **Technique Consistency:** A swimmer may be fast, but still requires greater consistency in stroke mechanics, turns, or streamlines under training fatigue.
- **Racing Maturity:** The swimmer is still gaining experience, trying new events, or developing the confidence needed to race effectively.
- **Physical Readiness:** A young athlete’s body is continuously developing. Moving a swimmer into an older training environment too early can place undue stress on growth, recovery, and long-term health.
- **Mental & Emotional Preparedness:** Higher-level groups demand increased focus, emotional regulation, independence, and resilience. Advancing too soon can lead to burnout, frustration, and a decline in confidence or enjoyment.
- **Social & Developmental Fit:** Peer dynamics are critical to a positive team experience. Keeping swimmers with peers at a similar developmental stage fosters stronger social connections, leadership, and athletic engagement.

Remaining in a group is never a set-back or punishment. Often, it provides swimmers the valuable opportunity to master core skills, step into leadership roles, build confidence, and enter the next level fully prepared rather than overwhelmed.

COMMUNICATION & SWIMMER OWNERSHIP

If questions arise regarding group placement, families must follow the official communication pathway outlined in this handbook.

- **Swimmer-Led Process:** Group placement discussions are led by the athlete, not the parent. The swimmer is responsible for asking their coach what skills they are executing well, what areas need refinement, and what benchmark behaviors they must consistently demonstrate to advance.
- **Parent Role:** Parents are welcome to attend scheduled meetings, but the swimmer is expected to own the conversation.
- **Continuous Assessment:** Falcons coaches continuously evaluate swimmers for placement. Discussions focus on what specific technical, physical, or mental steps a swimmer needs to take to progress.

SPECIAL PLACEMENT GUIDELINES

Older Beginners & Late Entrants

When an older athlete is new to competitive swimming, placement prioritizes safety and foundational skill development while balancing social maturity. The Head Coach will work along side of Assistant Coaches and may adjust group placement. We will work together to establish a tailored, short-term plan to assist in guiding the swimmer to success without skipping critical fundamentals.

Returning After an Extended Break

If a swimmer takes an extended break from the sport, they may be placed in a lower training group upon return. This temporary adjustment ensures they safely rebuild conditioning, strength, and technique before resuming higher-intensity training.

SWIM MEETS

We are a swim TEAM. This means we expect all Falcons to participate in at least two competitions per year. If your Athlete qualifies for any Championship meets, we ask that you plan to attend. We want all our Falcons to be working towards our goals during the season. Competitions are fun, help reiterate all rules and reasons for what we train for in practice and are the best way to show up for your team!

All meet fees charged from the HOST will be charged to your account within one week of the competition. Some meets may have a small Falcon charge. We will inform you before you commit to the meet if one is required. Our annual registration fee supports our coaches and team in attending away meets. We will do our best to keep any additional charges to a minimum.

Meet charges vary by event and may include entry fees (individual and relay), athlete surcharges, and host team fees.

All prices are per athlete, per competition:

DUAL
\$15/\$20

INVITE
\$20/\$30

MULTI-DAY
\$30/\$40

CHAMPIONSHIP
\$30+

Additional costs may arise depending on size, distance, etc.

*All prices are subject to change depending on varying factors.

YMCA vs. USAS COMPETITIONS

The YMCA offers a wide range of meets for our swimmers. These usually are small, one-day dual meets, which are great introductory meets for new swimmers. They also offer longer days and even multiple-day meets.

USA Swimming is the governing body of swimming in the US and works very closely with the international federation for developing and supervising national and international competitions. This circuit usually involves multiple-day meets divided into sessions where an athlete may swim 2-4 days but will not need to stay all day. Our state is governed by Illinois Swimming, Inc. (ISI) and supervises the competitions in this state, which also offers a championship season: Regionals (A times), Age Group State Championships (14 & U), and Senior State Championships (open). In cooperation with USA Swimming, the series continues to Sectionals involving 5-7 different states, Jr. Nationals, Senior Nationals, US Open, and Olympic Trials. There are also special meets during the year for which you can apply, which are great opportunities to swim with other states and competitors. These include: Zones, Mid-States, Select Camps, and Sprint Camps.

MEET GUIDELINES

SIGNING UP FOR A MEET

The coach(s) of your group will be able to provide you with guidance as to which meets your athlete should attend. Some meets are open to any entries, and some require certain time standards. The meet information is posted on our team website and also emailed to our members. We will also email a reminder to sign up for meets with notification of the dates of entry deadlines.

A few days before the meet:

- Make sure you have directions
- Ensure the athletes are getting proper nutrition and rest
- Ensure the athletes have their homework under control
- Recommendations on items to bring to a meet:
 - Nutritious snacks
 - Team swimsuit
 - Two swim caps and two goggles (in case one breaks)
 - Talcum powder for the swim caps so they don't stick together when wet
 - Two or more towels
 - Something to sit on, e.g., sleeping bag, old blanket, etc.
 - Warm-ups/a sweatshirt, and sweatpants
 - Two T-shirts
 - Sandals/shoes
 - Items to pass the time between events, e.g., homework, games, books, cards
 - Drinks, water, sports drinks

Note:

The pool area is typically very warm and humid. However, the team area is usually cooler, so wearing layers of clothes is recommended. Please dress appropriately.

Before the meet starts:

Eat in advance and get proper nutrition (see nutrition section).

Arrive at the pool 10-15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time. The time will be listed in the meet info.

Upon arrival, find a place to put your personal belongings. The team swimmers and their families "camp" together in the gym or other large open area. Lawn chairs, sleeping bags, blankets, and towels are prevalent.

If the meet requires "Positive Check-in," proceed to the meet registrar or the clerk of the course and sign in each swimmer for each event. This requirement varies for different meets. If it is required, the swimmer must sign in or be scratched from competing that day.

Once you have checked in, you can write each event and number on the swimmer's hand with ink or a Sharpie. This helps them remember when and what they are swimming.

Get ready for warm-ups! All swimmers must warm up before competition to ensure great success and prevent injury. The coach(s) will direct the athlete to the pool and tell them what to do. There is NO DIVING in general warm-ups! Sit and slide in only. There will be a time when dive starts are allowed. Please be on time because there are some meets where we have very limited time to warm up!

Once the Meet Starts:

It is important for each swimmer to know the events they are swimming in. They might swim immediately following warm-ups or wait an hour until their first event. It is important that swimmers stay in the team area and listen for their event to be called. Missing an event can lead to the swimmer being disqualified from other events or even the rest of the meet at some competitions.

Event numbers are usually called over a loudspeaker and posted on a board. At some meets, the swimmer will need to report to the "bullpen" at that time. Swimmers should bring their caps and goggles and continue to wear warm clothes. The bullpen is an area where they check in before each event. An official volunteer will give each swimmer instructions on where to go for his/her event. Sometimes swimmers will be given a card in the bullpen, which will include the swimmer's name, event heat, and lane. This card should be given to the timer in his/her lane.

Upon completion of a race, the swimmer should ask for his/her time from the timer in his/her lane, check the scoreboard to get the time, and then report directly to the coach on the pool deck to discuss the race.

The coach will provide positive feedback and suggestions for improvement, and then answer any questions that the swimmer might have about the race. As a parent, you should congratulate your swimmer's effort and acknowledge his/her effort. Leave any suggestions for improvement to the coach. Return to the team area with your swimmer and encourage him/her to relax. Get your swimmer a light snack or drink if needed.

At the End of the Meet:

When a swimmer has completed all his/her individual and relay events, the swimmer can leave after checking with the coach. Please clean up any mess in the team area and make sure you have all of your belongings. Ensure your swimmer has checked with the coach for additional instructions about the next day or if he/she is needed for a relay or anything else.

Awards:

Some meets offer small heat winner prizes like candy, coupons, or keychains. At the end of each event, swimmers are ranked by time, and top finishers in each age group may receive medals, ribbons, or trophies. Awards vary by meet and may be based on time standards (A, B, C), which are posted on the ISI website. Coaches usually collect awards and hand them out at the next practice. Regardless of awards, swimmers should focus on doing their best and improving their times.

Receiving Awards in Public:

Swimmers should be prompt, respectful, and show good sportsmanship during award presentations. A simple "thank you" and congratulating others is encouraged. If photos are taken, please stay until they're done, no over-the-top posing. Remember, how you act reflects on the entire team.



MEET EXPECTATIONS

The athletes, parents, coaches, and team officials not only represent our team but the YMCA, our community, and our state. Here are our team expectations for all representatives of our team for all competitions:

- Model the YMCA values of Caring, Honesty, Responsibility, and Respect
- Display good sportsmanship at all times
- Direct entry, seeding, relay, and other questions to the Falcon HEAD coach and never to the host team. All communication with the host team must be done through the coach, or we run the risk of not being invited back!
- Remember that competition is for self-improvement. Do not worry about place or particular awards. Try to focus on the things that the athlete can control, such as streamlines, turns, breathing, finishes, and intensity. You cannot control someone else's performance; therefore, you cannot control your place or award.
- Say "Good Luck" before a race or "Nice Job" after a race to all competitors, especially your teammates.
- Wear team apparel
- Participate in the team cheer

Day of Competition:

- There are several documents posted on the meet page of our website. These have all the info you need leading up to a competition.
- The Meet Overview is the most important. It is a brief description of the meet with Falcon, specific details about the facility, format, warm-ups, etc. If there is a discrepancy between the Meet Packet (Detailed Meet info) and the Meet Overview, please follow the Meet Overview.
- Please be on time for warm-ups! Most meets have a check-in system. If we do not check in on time, then they usually scratch you from the meet. Some meet you can get back in, and there are a few where you will not be able to swim. You will also be replaced on a relay if you don't check in.
- If you are late or are not going to make it, call or text the coach at the meet. Coaches' names and cell phones are listed in the Meet overview at the bottom of the report.
- We have relays for most age groups at most meets. We try to get EVERYONE on a relay during a meet. If you don't get on a relay, there will be more opportunities we have. By the time Championship season arrives, everyone has had many opportunities to swim, so we will take the four fastest swimmers who are available.
- Swimmers and parents are encouraged to sit in the team area when we have one. In places where the parents and swimmers are separated, we encourage our swimmers to sit together to promote team bonding. Younger swimmers will be seated near coaches.
- Home meets are very important to our team! It is an opportunity to keep travel costs down for our participants, swim in "Home" meets where they might feel more comfortable, raise money for the team, as well as many other benefits. We ask ALL of our members to help at home meets in some way. We need all team members available to run an efficient meet. You do not need prior experience to help. We will let you know what to do.



SWIMMING SEASONS



SHORT COURSE

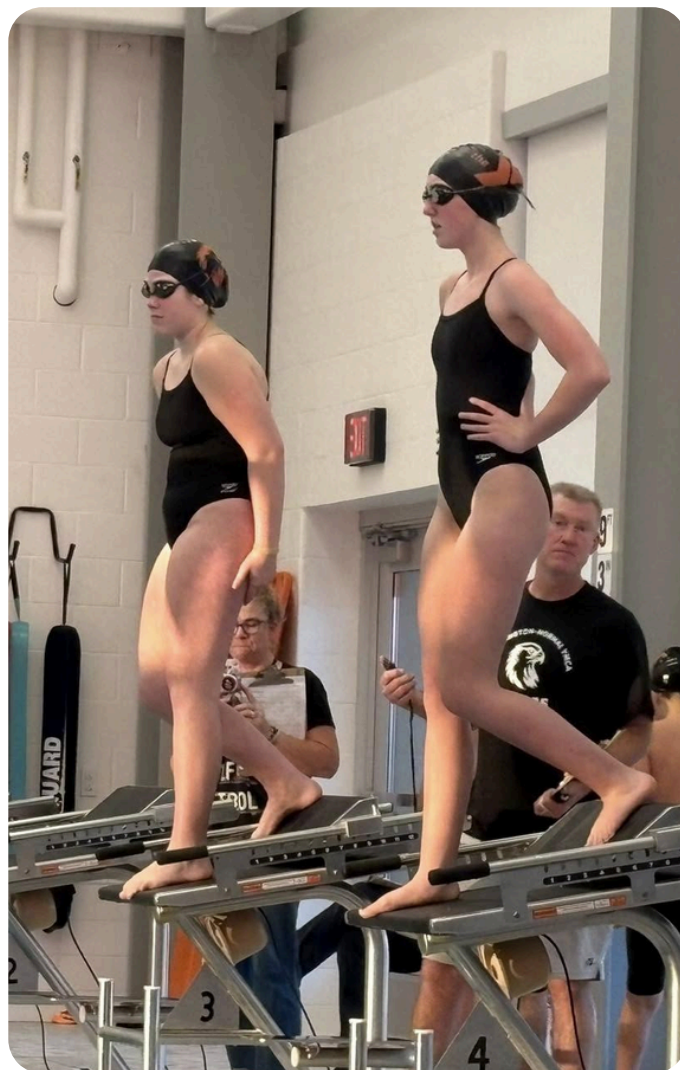
This season lasts from September to April each year. Events are swam in a 25-yard pool. The short course yard time standards apply to all meets during this time.



LONG COURSE

This season lasts from April through August each year. Events are swam in a 50-meter pool. The long course meter time standards apply to all meets during this time.

CODE OF CONDUCT



These are the Bloomington-Normal YMCA Falcon behavior guidelines. All parents, coaches, volunteers, officials, and athletes are expected to follow this code at all practices, meets, and team functions.

1. Please follow the code of conduct at all times. Even if you are out in the community, try to set a great example of what our team is all about.
2. Follow the YMCA core values of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility.
3. Comply with all National and Illinois area YMCA, as well as USA Swimming, rules and regulations. When competing on a national scale, know the doping control rules (USADA). You can get USADA guidelines from usaswimming.org.
4. Refrain from unsportsmanlike, indiscreet, or destructive behavior and obscene language.
5. Avoid being "guilty by association" with any people who violate this code of conduct. If there are FALCON participants not following these rules, you must immediately distance yourself, or you run the risk of being assumed you have participated as well.
6. Listen and follow the directions of your coaches, officials, and volunteers.
7. To get the highest benefit from training, participants should abstain from the use of alcohol, tobacco products, and/or other illegal or performance-enhancing drugs. Any athlete determined to have used, is in use of, or has any of the substances at any Falcons practice, meet, or other function shall be subject to suspension or dismissal from the team.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Violations of the code of conduct or our practice, or failure to meet guidelines, could result in the following consequences:

Practice:

1. After the first violation, a swimmer will be instructed to exit the pool for 5 minutes. A coach, when appropriate, will discuss the matter with the athlete before he/she gets back in the pool.
2. After the second violation, the swimmer will be instructed to leave practice for the day, and the parent or guardian will be notified.
3. If these behaviors continue, the athlete will not be allowed to participate in any more practices until the parent, athlete, head coach, and Senior Director schedule a meeting together.
4. If the attitude cannot be adjusted, the swimmer will be asked to stop swimming until he/she can control his/her behavior.

Competition/ Team Functions:

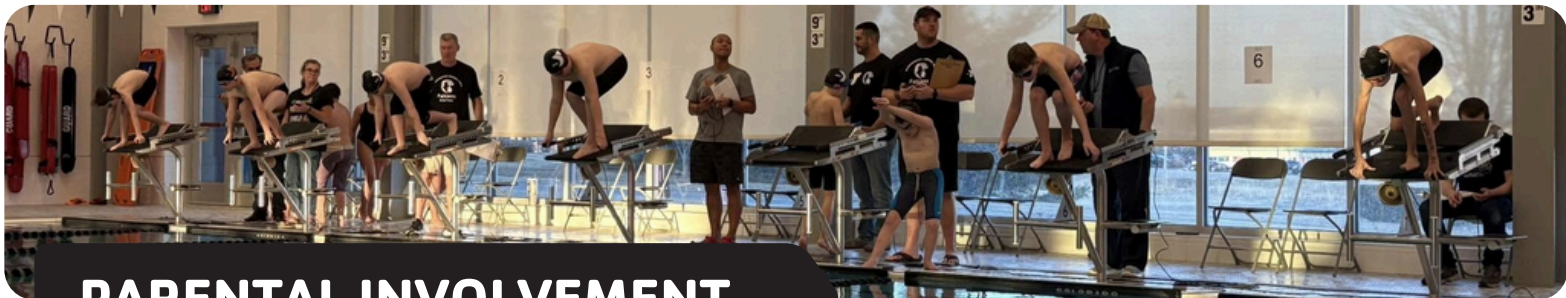
1. After the first violation, the swimmer will have to meet with the coach before further competition. If not, he/she runs the risk of the coach(s) scratching him/her from the remainder of the day or pulling him/her from a relay.
2. After the second violation, the swimmer and the parent/guardian must meet with the coach and Senior Aquatic Director before further competition. If they do not, they run the risk of the coach scratching the swimmer for the remainder of the day or pulling the swimmer from a relay.
3. If the behavior doesn't stop, then the coach will scratch the swimmer from the rest of the meet, and he/she will not be allowed to participate in any more meets until the coach, Senior Aquatic Director, parent/guardian, and swimmer schedule a meeting together.

Note:

Any third violation can carry a 3- to 14-day suspension. A swimmer and/or his/her parent/guardian may appeal any suspension over three days (within those first three days) to the Head Coach and Senior Aquatic Director. The Head Coach shall decide on the matter after discussing it with all parties involved.

In extreme cases, permanent dismissal from the team may be imposed upon a participant by decision of the Head Coach. The matter will be thoroughly discussed with the parties involved and the Senior Aquatic Director. Any such dismissal decision may be appealed to the Senior Aquatic Director and Chief Operations Officer.





PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parents are a key element in their athlete's success. Along with the coach and the athlete themselves, the parents must provide support. The best way to ensure your child's success is to follow the guidelines below:

The greatest contribution that you can make to your swimmer's progress is to be a loving, supportive parent.

- Do not coach your child. Even if you were a swimmer, please remember these things:

Things change and may not be the same as when you were swimming. We may be working on something other than what you saw. Most kids can only handle one thing at a time when racing, so we try to have them work on the skills they were practicing in practice.

Please leave the coaching to the coaches and direct any questions about a race to the coach(s) at an appropriate time.

We know you only want the very best for your child, but coaching and commenting confuse them on two issues: one, it can bring a negative connotation to the post-race conversation that the race wasn't good enough for you, and two, they won't know who to listen to, especially if the information is conflicting.

- Help new parents get acclimated.
- Be sure to attend all parent education meetings or, at least, get the information from the website.

FUNDRAISERS

Falcon will conduct non-intrusive and non-mandatory fundraisers to stay financially viable. These usually will not interfere with the athlete's practice time and will not burden their free time outside of school and swim practice. Examples of fundraising activities include car washes, selling heat sheet ads, Falcon night at local restaurants, swim-a-thon, selling concessions, and enlisting the support of local sponsors. If you have an idea of a nonintrusive fundraiser, call or email our Senior Aquatic Director. These all help keep our costs down.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The YMCA has an Open Doors Program to provide financial assistance for memberships and programs (this does not include USAS dues) for those who qualify. Please contact the Senior Aquatic Director at 3098276233, in person, or by email for more information (timr@bnymca.org). There are many levels of assistance, and we are constantly adjusting the system.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

As a team, we are committed to providing local opportunities for our athletes to compete. We do this by hosting occasional in-town meets. These meets provide financial support for our team, minimize travel costs for our families, and give our athletes the comfort and advantage of competing in a familiar pool. As parent volunteers, we partner together to fully run these in-town meets. To do this, we need your help!

What are the service requirements?

We host occasional meets during the year. Some are dual meets run on a weekend morning or afternoon (YMCA meets), while others are large invitational meets.

DUAL MEETS:

For YMCA meets (duals), all families that attend are expected to have at least one worker if your swimmer is participating in that meet. This also includes championship meets (District and Area).

HOSTED MEETS:

If you have a swimmer who participates in any of these meets, regardless of how many sessions he/she swims in that meet, you are required to serve 3 sessions during that meet. One of the sessions can be a food donation. If you do not serve, you will be charged \$50 per session of service that was not completed.

OUT-OF-TOWN MEETS:

If your swimmer is swimming at an out-of-town meet, often the host team will ask each team to provide timers. The number of volunteers our team needs to provide will be posted in the meet overview in the days leading up to the meet. It is our job as parents to jump in and help take turns serving for our team at these meets. This is especially true during our championship season.

How do I sign up to serve?

Our volunteer coordinators will email you before each meeting with a link to go online and sign up. The volunteer coordinators usually use SignUp Genius.

What areas can I serve in?

For every meet, we need help with meet set-up/tear down, timers, runners, concessions, and more. There are plenty of places to help, and none require previous experience. If you have questions or need suggestions, just ask the Volunteer Coordinator. If you know that you will not be able to help at a particular meet, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know as soon as possible (preferably 2 to 4 weeks before the meet), or you will be charged for those missed sessions.

What if I don't serve?

Families that do not meet the volunteer commitment and do not make other arrangements will be billed \$50 per missed session. Please understand we would prefer your assistance.

NUTRITION

All athletes in training require frequent, well-balanced meals. Expect your swimmers to feel hungry more often and to have bigger appetites. Satisfy this hunger with 3 meals supplemented with 2-3 snacks per day. Serve nutritious foods while avoiding sugar-based snacks and drinks. Coaches will discuss age-appropriate nutritional information with individual athletes. Periodically, coaches will also distribute additional nutritional information via newsletters or at practice.

The key to good nutrition is balance, balance of food sources, choice, and frequency. Because different nutrients serve different purposes, it is important to get a proper ratio of carbohydrates, proteins, and good dietary fat at every meal. Different foods also provide different nutrients, so it is important to vary the types of foods served at every meal and every day.

Carbohydrates:

The primary fuel source for moderate to high levels of activity. The goal for active individuals is to eat 50%-65% of total calories as carbohydrates. There are 2 types of carbohydrates: simple and complex. Simple carbohydrates are digested quickly but contain refined sugars and few essential vitamins and minerals. Examples include fruits, fruit juice, milk, yogurt, honey, molasses, and sugar. Complex carbohydrates take longer to digest and are usually packed with fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Examples include vegetables, whole grain breads, whole grain cereals, beans, potatoes, root vegetables, and whole grain pasta.

****Contrary to popular belief, you do not need to overload on complex carbohydrates. Athletes also do not need to reduce their carbohydrate intake. Consuming balanced meals with reasonably sized portions is the best for athletes.****

Proteins:

Often overlooked because they are not as readily available, proteins are essential building blocks of muscle tissue. The soreness athletes experience in their muscles is the result of tiny micro tears in the muscle. Proteins repair these tears and strengthen the muscle, so these tears do not occur again at the same exercise intensity. This is adaptation and the process by which you improve. A good goal is 3 servings of dairy a day and 2-3 servings of high-quality protein a day. Proteins should make up 15%-20% of daily caloric intake.

Fats:

There are many negative thoughts about fats; however, these are the primary fuel sources for moderate to low levels of activity and are essential for many body functions. There are two types of fat: saturated and unsaturated. You want to get as much of your fat from unsaturated fats as you can. They are found in foods like salmon, avocados, olives, walnuts, and almonds. Saturated and trans fats are usually solid at room temperature and can be broken down into acids that can promote fat storage. Partially hydrogenated oils are included in this category. No more than 30% of calories should come from fat.

Examples of some balanced meals include:

Breakfast #1

- 1 cup oatmeal
- A few almonds
- 2 slices Canadian bacon
- ½ banana
- 8 oz low-fat/skim milk

Lunch #1

- 2 slices of whole wheat bread
- 3 oz turkey or chicken
- Lettuce, tomato, light mayo, mustard
- ½ cup fruit
- 1 cup fresh veggies (or 2 cups salad with veggies)
- 8 oz low-fat/skim milk

Dinner #1

- 1–2 cups chicken stir-fry (broccoli, cauliflower, mushrooms, peppers, onions, snow peas, 1 tsp sesame oil)
- ½ cup steamed rice
- 1 cup fresh strawberries
- 8 oz low-fat/skim milk

Breakfast #2

- Scrambled eggs
- 1 tbsp peanut butter on 1 slice of whole wheat toast
- 6 oz orange juice
- 8 oz low-fat/skim milk

Lunch #2

- 2 slices of whole wheat bread
- 3 oz tuna salad (light mayo, lettuce, tomato)
- ½ cup fruit
- 1 cup pasta salad with veggies and light Italian dressing
- 8 oz low-fat/skim milk

Dinner #2

- Lean pork medallion
- Dijon mustard
- Tossed salad with veggies and light/fat-free or vinegar & oil dressing
- Steamed broccoli
- Apple
- 8 oz low-fat/skim milk

POST-WORKOUT NOTE:

After workouts or races, aim to consume a quick recovery snack with carbohydrates + protein within 30 minutes, followed by a full meal within 2 hours for optimal recovery.

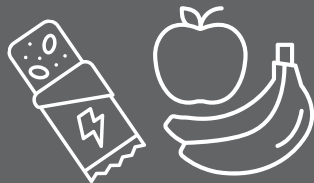


MEET SNACKS

You want to eat small amounts throughout a meet. Do not eat a huge breakfast and then nothing else. Your energy levels will fluctuate too much. Start with a moderate, balanced breakfast and then snack on healthy, energy-dense foods. Choosing only carbohydrates will cause an energy “crash” during meets, and performance can suffer. Similarly, choosing “simple” carbohydrates, including soda, potato chips, and candy, will result in the same unpredictable “crash.” BALANCE is the key.

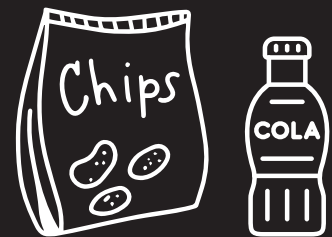
CHOOSE THESE:

Low-fat granola bars, Candy bars, Trail Mix (without M&M's), Dry Cheerios, Chex Apple w/ peanut butter, Crackers with cheese or peanut butter, Goldfish, Yogurt/Yogurt and fruit smoothies, Whole grain bagel w/ cream cheese, Water or Gatorade



AVOID THESE:

Potato chips, Fruity, sugary cereals, Fruit snacks, Cookies, Puppy Chow, Ice cream, Doughnuts, Any soda, even diet



INJURY & ILLNESSES

If an athlete is not feeling well, please let the coach know. If a swimmer has an infectious disease, the athlete's parents must inform the coach, and the coach will inform the other athletes who might have been exposed. Specifically, athletes who have a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, or an infection should not be in the pool.

If the athlete has an open, bleeding wound, it must be covered so it is completely water-tight, or they cannot enter the pool. We encourage athletes to come to practice regularly. During practice, if an athlete is unable to swim for the duration or unable to swim to his/her potential, then he/she should discuss the situation with the coach in advance of entering the water in order to prevent any complications. If an athlete suffers an injury, the athlete should inform the coach immediately. This includes pulled muscles, cuts, bruises, and muscle cramps. The coach will provide guidance on relief for minor injuries or take immediate action in the unlikely event of a serious injury. There are many times, exercises one can still do during practice even though an athlete might be injured.

PLEASE TALK TO YOUR COACH!



EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN (EAP)

Purpose

This Emergency Action Plan (EAP) establishes clear procedures to ensure the safety of staff, patrons, and visitors by effectively identifying, reporting, and responding to workplace hazards and emergencies. Every employee has the right to be informed of potential hazards and participate in the reporting and mitigation of safety risks. The plan provides a framework for communication, hazard management, and emergency response across all facility areas.

Training and Preparation

Aquatic Senior Directors and Coordinators are responsible for:

- Developing staff schedules and assigning a Shift Supervisor for each shift.
- Ensuring all team members are properly trained and understand their specific emergency responsibilities.
- Conducting department-specific emergency training to prepare staff for various scenarios.

Each employee must be familiar with emergency protocols and participate in regular drills. Staff are responsible for adhering to EAP procedures and escalating issues to Supervisors as needed.

Supervisors and Communication Protocol

- Supervisors are assigned to oversee specific facility areas during each shift and will carry two-way radios at all times to coordinate communication.
- All staff members must report hazards, incidents, or emergencies immediately to the nearest Supervisor via radio.
- Supervisor roles and actions for major emergencies are outlined in the respective EAPs for each scenario.

Facility Areas of Responsibility

The facility is divided into the following supervisory zones:

- Area 1: Front desk, chapel, laundry room, main lounge, basketball courts
- Area 2: Teen/Intergen, Kid Adventure, Childwatch, playgrounds
- Area 3: Natatorium, steam room, sauna, locker rooms
- Area 4: Studios, balcony, track, cardio, wellness areas
- Area 5: Mechanical rooms

If a hazard is observed or an incident occurs, staff must implement the relevant EAP immediately and notify the Supervisor for that area.

EAP CONTINUED

Medical Emergencies

If the individual is responsive and does not appear to have life-threatening conditions:

1. Interview the person (or bystanders) using the SAMPLE method:
 - Signs and symptoms
 - Allergies
 - Medications
 - Pertinent medical history
 - Last oral intake
 - Events leading to the incident
2. Perform a focused physical check based on symptoms and observations.
3. Note: Avoid moving the person if there is any suspicion of head, neck, or spinal injury. Look for medical identification tags if present.
4. After the assessment, call 9-1-1 if needed, and retrieve emergency equipment. Provide care based on the situation and your level of training.

Aquatic Emergency Response: Fecal and Vomit Incidents

The Bloomington-Normal YMCA follows the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) standards for managing pool contamination incidents. These incidents include fecal or vomit contamination in any pool or aquatic feature.

Steps for Pool Contamination Response:

1. Evacuate and Close the Pool:
 - Aquatics staff must clear all patrons and close the pool immediately following any contamination.
 - Log the incident and notify the Senior Director of Facilities and the Senior Director of Aquatics.
2. Remove Visible Material:
 - Wear appropriate PPE (e.g., gloves, masks) and remove any visible material with a net or bucket.
 - Disinfect the tools used and dispose of the material and PPE in a red biohazard bag. Place the sealed bag in the biohazard trash can located in the pool storage room.
3. Superchlorinate the Area:
 - Superchlorinate the affected area by adding liquid pool shock to raise chlorine levels.
 - The pool must remain closed for at least 30 minutes while superchlorination takes effect.
4. Test Water Quality:
 - After 30 minutes, test free chlorine levels in the affected area.
 - If chlorine is between 1–4 ppm and pH is 7.2–7.8, the area can reopen.
 - If chlorine exceeds 4 ppm, apply a chlorine neutralizer and retest in 30 minutes.
 - Report all chemical test results to the Senior Director of Facilities and the Senior Director of Aquatics for documentation.
5. Partial Pool Reopening:
 - For large pools, only the contaminated area (e.g., splash pad) will remain closed, with unaffected sections reopened as soon as they are safe.

EAP CONTINUED

Pre-Emergency Preparedness

1. Walkie Settings and Communication:

- Set your walkie-talkie to Channel 7.
- Ensure the walkie-talkie is loud enough to hear over the pool noise.
- Actively listen for all communication over the walkie.
- If you miss or do not understand a message, ask for a repeat immediately.

2. Location Awareness:

- Familiarize yourself with all building locations.
 - Example: "Code Blue in Studio B"
 - Example: "Code Blue in the Chapel"
- Know the Crash Bag location.
- Review the contents of the Crash Bag regularly to understand what is available in an emergency.

Responding to a Code Blue

1. Initial Response:

- Stay calm and move at a steady pace to the emergency location.
- Engage the individual using simple questions to keep them calm and aware.

2. Team Communication and Protocols:

- Coordinate with other team members to confirm whether 911 has been called.
- If 911 has not yet been called, ensure it is done promptly.

3. During the Emergency:

- Follow proper medical protocols based on the specific situation.
- When EMS arrives, care is smoothly transitioned to them.

Post-Emergency Procedures

1. Incident Reporting:

- Ensure the front desk or the nearest supervisor completes an incident report.

FIRE EMERGENCY

This procedure outlines the roles, responsibilities, and steps to be followed in the event of a fire at the Bloomington-Normal YMCA to ensure the safety of staff, members, and guests.

Procedure

1. Detecting a Fire:

- If a fire or signs of a fire are detected, staff must immediately activate the nearest fire alarm pull station, unless the alarm is already sounding.
- Staff are not required to fight fires. The priority is to ensure the safe evacuation of everyone in the facility.

Roles & Responsibilities

Supervisors

1. Upon hearing the fire alarm, grab a first aid fanny pack and an AED.
2. Guide members and guests through the nearest clear evacuation route in an orderly manner.
3. Lead all participants in your area to the designated rally points located at the North or West parking lot.
4. Conduct a headcount to ensure everyone is accounted for.
5. Report any injuries or missing individuals to the operations team using a walkie-talkie.
6. Do not allow anyone to re-enter the facility until the "All Clear" is given by the Fire Chief.

Operations Team

1. Perform a facility-wide sweep to ensure no one has been left behind in:
 - Restrooms
 - Locker rooms
 - Pools
 - Any hidden or overlooked spaces
2. Escort anyone found during the sweep to the nearest clear evacuation route and an Area Supervisor.
3. Once the sweep is complete, meet with emergency services at the North or West parking lot.
4. Act as the liaison between emergency services and Facility Supervisors.

Other Staff

- Assist Facility Supervisors in guiding patrons to the evacuation points.
- If already outside during the alarm, proceed to the rally points and assist with headcounts.
- Await the "All Clear" before resuming normal duties.

Evacuation Guidelines

- Use the nearest clear evacuation route and avoid elevators.
- Keep doors closed to slow the spread of fire.
- Once outside, stay at the rally points until directed otherwise.

Communication with Emergency Services

- Operations staff will stay in touch with emergency responders and provide them with any relevant updates regarding missing individuals or injuries.

All-Clear Procedure

- No one may re-enter the facility until emergency personnel or senior leadership provide an official "All Clear" notification.

MISSING OR LOST CHILDREN

The BNYMCA uses CODE ADAM in response to a reported missing or lost child. If any staff member comes into contact with a child who has lost their parent, or a parent who is reporting their child missing, they are to enact the CODE ADAM action plan below.

1. Get a Description –

If a visitor reports a missing child in the YMCA, quickly get a description and/or photo if available. The description should include: Name, age, gender, hair color, and eye color. Approximate height and weight. What the child is wearing, including color and type of clothing and shoes

2. Page CODE ADAM –

Using the phone paging system and walkie-talkies, announce a “CODE ADAM” followed by a description of the missing child.

3. Begin the Search –

All available staff should begin looking for the child. Your supervisor will assign responsibilities for monitoring search areas such as the restrooms and backrooms. Staff covering entrances/exits should ask visitors with children resembling the missing child description to wait until management arrives. During this time, they should ask the child his/her name and if the adult is his/her parent. As the search begins, escort the parent/guardian of the missing child to the facility’s entrance to assist in identifying the lost child.

4. Call the Police – DON’T HESITATE, CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY.

Police would rather get a second call saying the child was found than learn too late the child has been abducted. If video surveillance is available, provide it to the police when they arrive.

5. Locate the Child –

If the child is found and appears to have been lost and unharmed, reunite the child with the parent or guardian. If the child is found accompanied by someone other than the parent/guardian. Use reasonable efforts to delay the departure of the adult and child from the property, but DO NOT put yourself, the staff, or customers at risk. If the adult leaves the property with the child, call the police and describe the person accompanying the child, vehicle information, and direction of travel, if possible.

6. Conclude the incident –

Using the phone paging system and walkie-talkies, announce “CODE ADAM canceled”. Submit a report of the incident to management with an accident/incident report form, even if the child wandered, triggering the “CODE ADAM” alert.

ALICE – ACTIVE SHOOTER RESPONSE PROTOCOL

Alert – Alert is your first notification of Danger.

Alert is when you first become aware of a threat. The sooner you understand that you're in danger, the sooner you can save yourself. A speedy response is critical. Seconds count.

Alert is overcoming denial, recognizing the signs of danger, and receiving notifications about the danger from others. Alerts should be accepted, taken seriously, and should help you make survival decisions based on your circumstances.

Lockdown – Barricade the room. Prepare to EVACUATE or COUNTER if needed.

If EVACUATION is not a safe option, barricade entry points into your room in an effort to create a semi-secure starting point.

Inform – Communicate the violent intruder's location and direction in real-time.

The purpose of INFORM is to continue to communicate information in as real-time as possible if it is safe to do so. Armed intruder situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly, which means that ongoing, real-time information is key to making effective survival decisions. Information should always be clear, direct, and in plain language, not using codes. If the shooter is known to be in an isolated section of a building, occupants in other wards can safely evacuate while those in direct danger can perform enhanced lockdown and prepare to counter. Video surveillance, 911 calls, and PA announcements are just a few of the channels that may be used by employees, safety officers, and other personnel to inform others.

Counter – Create Noise, Movement, Distance, and Distraction with the intent of reducing the shooter's ability to shoot accurately. The counterperson is NOT fighting.

The counter is a strategy of last resort. Counter focuses on actions that create noise, movement, distance, and distraction with the intent of reducing the shooter's ability to shoot accurately. Creating a dynamic environment decreases the shooter's chance of hitting a target and can provide the precious seconds needed to evacuate.

Evacuate – When safe to do so, remove yourself from the danger zone.

Evacuating to a safe area takes people out of harm's way and hopefully prevents civilians from having to come into contact with the shooter.

TORNADO

In the event of a confirmed touchdown of a tornado, or if tornado sirens are sounded during a tornado warning. Staff are to begin enacting the procedures laid out below to move members, guests, and participants to the tornado shelter zone. The tornado shelter zone is centrally located in the facility and is free of exterior windows.

Roles & Responsibilities:

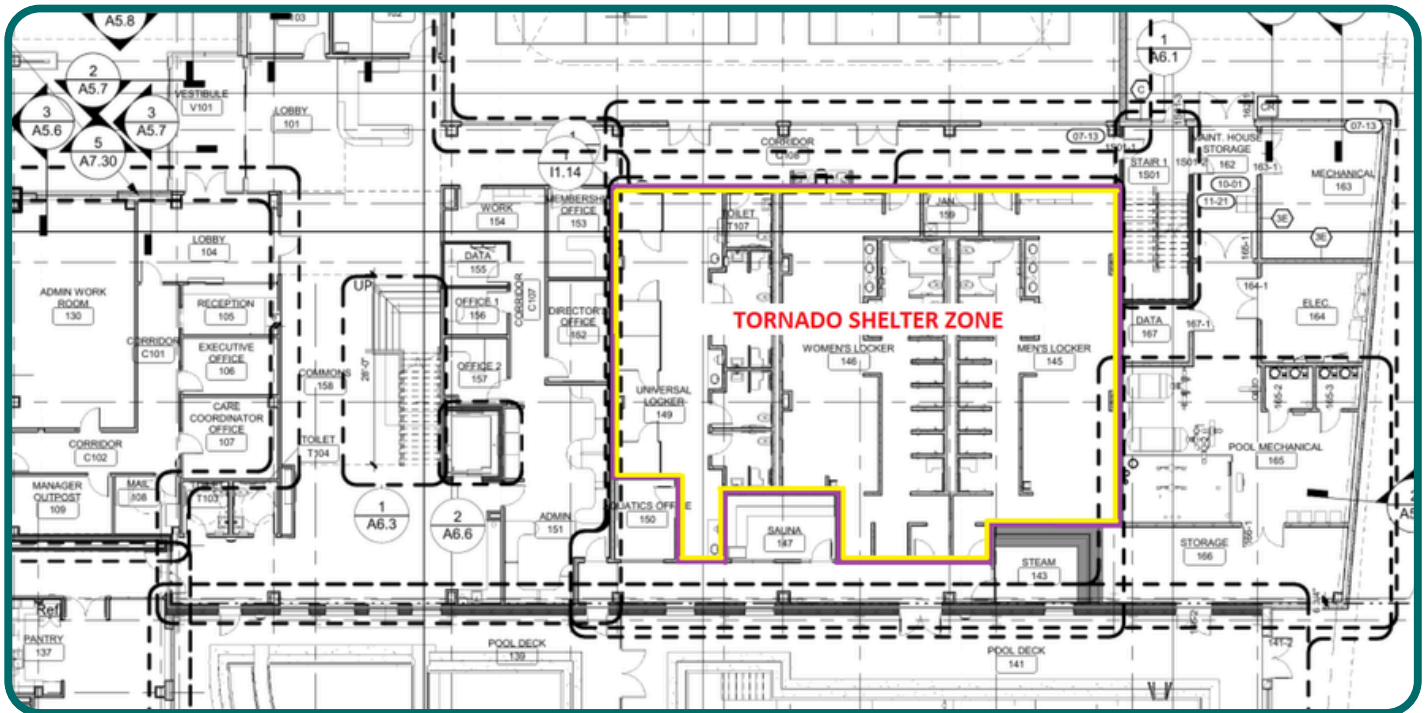
Frontline Staff - In the event of a tornado emergency, frontline staff will be responsible for grabbing a first aid fanny pack and an AED while guiding members in an orderly fashion to the tornado shelter zone. Once everyone has been moved to the tornado shelter zone, staff are to await the all-clear from a member of the operations team.

Operations Team -

It is the responsibility of the operations team to conduct a thorough sweep of the facility as quickly as possible. This sweep should include checking all restrooms, locker rooms, pools, and other areas where people could have been overlooked as the area supervisors were escorting their groups. Anyone found during this sweep should be guided to the tornado shelter zone. Once the operations team has swept the facility, they are to head to the shelter zone as well. The operations team is to keep an eye on the weather reports and give the area supervisors an all-clear when the danger has passed.

Other staff -

All staff members are to assist in moving patrons to the tornado shelter zone. No staff should be holding programming outside during a tornado watch or warning. If there are staff or patrons on the playground equipment, they are to be brought inside and directed to the tornado shelter zone.



APPENDIX A – MEET THE COACHES

Meet Head Coach – Suzanne Richardson

Suzanne has been involved in swimming since she was three years old. She has held numerous age-group and state championships and records. She was state champion in the 50 Free competing for University High School, and competed on the Brazilian national team, representing South America, where she set the Brazilian and South American record for the women's 50-meter freestyle. Suzanne also holds pool records at Horton, where she competed for the Illinois State Redbirds Swim Team. Records still stand at various pools around Bloomington-Normal set during her swimming career. Along with her 20-year swimming career, Suzanne brings her 20 years of coaching experience. She trained and coached with Head Coach John Almeida. A Bloomington-Normal swimming legend who coached swimmers on the Redbird Swim Club into champions for six decades.



APPENDIX B – TEAM BY-LAWS

General Team By-Laws for USA Swimming
USA Swimming Article I - Name
1.1 The name of this organization shall be "Bloomington-Normal YMCA FALCONS"
1.2 The USAS club code shall be Falcon-IL.
1.3 The address for transactions is 202 Saint Joseph Dr., Bloomington, IL, 61701.
Article II – Purpose
2.1 To provide for a quality learning and training environment for all age levels.
2.2 To offer this opportunity in a fun and relaxed environment while instilling the YMCA values of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility.
2.3 To uphold the rules and purposes of USA Swimming, the YMCA, and Illinois Swimming, INC.
Article III – Institutional Control
3.1 The Head Coach(s) are in charge of direction and management of all phases of the program. They are supervised by YMCA management.

Article IV – Membership
4.1 There shall be one class of membership in this organization consisting of:
(i) the parents or legal guardians of and living with minor children who participate in amateur competitive swimming activities conducted by the corporation,
(ii) minor children who participate in amateur competitive swimming activities conducted by the corporation, and
(iii) emancipated persons who participate in amateur competitive swimming activities conducted by the corporation.
Members shall pay such dues and fees as may from time to time be fixed by the YMCA and the Executive Board.
Article V – Principles of Conduct
5.1 All participants (athletes, coaches, board members, parents, and volunteers) shall conduct themselves with courtesy and good sportsmanship and adhere to the YMCA values of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility.
5.2 This behavior shall reflect the high standards of USA Swimming, the YMCA, and Illinois Swimming, Inc.
5.3 Conduct unbecoming of a member of any of these institutions is subject to the discipline policy outlined in the Team Handbook
Article VI – Officers and Committees

APPENDIX C – SWIM TERM GLOSSARY

'A' Time: The qualifying time in a given event for the USA swimming 'A' classification level. Age Group Swimmers compete in most meets only with those in their respective age groups. Current USA swimming/ ISI age groups are: 8 & under, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, and senior. YMCA is similar.

Age Group Meet: All USAS registered swimmers, 18 years of age and younger, who have met the qualifying time standard for the specific event(s) are eligible to compete in their age category.

'B' Time: The qualifying time in a given event for the USA swimming 'B' classification meet. Block: The starting platform where a swimmer begins a race with a dive.

Bullpen: The area at a swim meet adjacent to the clerk of course, in which swimmers are assembled and assigned to their heats in advance of each event. Most meets will have a bullpen for younger swimmers and sometimes older swimmers.

'C' Time: The qualifying time in a given event for the USAS 'C' classification level.

Circle Swimming: In practice sessions or warm-ups, stay to the right of the black line on the bottom of the pool. When swimming in a lane with multiple people, it enables more swimmers to swim safely in each lane.

Classification of Meets: A swimmer's ability level is represented by his or her best time at a previous meet.

Clerk of Course: The person responsible for assigning swimmers to heats and lanes.

Consolation Final: A final swim after the preliminary heats, where swimmers typically compete for 9th through 16th place. These swimmers cannot receive a higher than 9th place.

Course: The designated distance in yards or meters over which the competition is conducted.

Cuts: The qualifying times for specific types of championship meets.

Deck Seeding: A procedure for assigning swimmers to the proper lanes and heats immediately before each event.

Declared False Start: When it is too late to scratch an event or the swimmer cannot or does not want to swim an event, yet will incur a penalty if missing the event, they can "Declare a False Start." The swimmer must clear this with their coach so they can go to the referee and tell them about the event before.

Disqualification (DQs): Trained officials (judges) watch each race. Swimmers with improper form or technique are disqualified and told the reason(s) why. Swimmers should not be discouraged by a disqualification. Most team members have experienced a few DQs. Pay close attention to the official's remarks and work hard (with your coach's direction) to remedy the problem. Swimmers should swim the remaining events that day and may enter the same event in the next meet.

Dryland Training: Training done out of the water that aids and enhances swimming performance; can include stretching, running, calisthenics, and weight lifting.

Dual Meet: Meets are conducted between only two teams. Dual meets usually have a limited number of entrants who can score in each event. **Event:** Any race or series of races (heats) in a given stroke and distance. **31 False Start:** Occurs if a swimmer on the block is moving after they are told to take their mark and before the start gun is sounded. In USA Swimming, a false start will result in disqualification after the race.

Final: The championship heat of an event in which, typically, the top 8 swimmers from the preliminaries compete for final place. These swimmers cannot receive worse than 8th place unless they are DQ'd. **Fins:** Soft, flexible, and usually made of rubber, fins or flippers are worn on a swimmer's feet in practice during certain drills. Some swimmers wear thin or old socks inside the fins to minimize chafing of their feet.

Flags: (Backstroke flags) are placed 5 yards (short course) or 5 meters (long course) from each end of the pool. The flags enable backstrokers to execute a backstroke turn more efficiently without having to turn around and find the wall.

Free Relay: Four swimmers comprise the relay team. Each athlete swims one quarter of the distance using any desired stroke.

Gutter: The area along the edge of the pool in which water overflows during a race and is recirculated through the filtration system.

Heat: A division of an event into a series of separate races. Each race is one heat. Multiple heats are needed when more swimmers enter an event than there are lanes in the pool.

Heat Sheet: A list of swimmers entered in each heat of each event of a meet. They are typically listed in order of seeding times and sometimes include lane and heat identification. The host of the meet prepares the heat sheets and sells them for a nominal fee just before the meet starts.

Individual Medley (IM): An event where the athlete swims all four competitive strokes in one race in the following order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.

ISI (Illinois Swimming Incorporated): The organization that administers and governs the state program for USA Swimming.

Junior Olympics (JOs): Now called Age Group State Championships. This is the end-of-season meet on a state level for those swimmers who qualify. Limited to 14-year-olds and under.

Kick Board: A Flat flotation device used in practice. Held in front of the swimmer, keeping their upper body afloat to work on strengthening the kick.

Lap Counter: A set of plastic display numbers used to keep track of laps during a distance race. Also, the person who counts for the swimmer can be called the lap counter. This person is stationed at the opposite end of the pool from the start and places the number in the water as the swimmer approaches to let them know how far they have swum.

Local Swimming Committee (LSC): Governing body for swimming at the local (typically State) level. There are 59 LSCs in the country.

Long Course: The term is designated for a 50-meter pool.

Medley Relay: Four swimmers comprise the relay team. Each athlete swims one quarter of the distance in the following order: backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, freestyle.

Mid-State Meet: A multi-state championship-style meet where swimmers compete as a state. This usually occurs the first weekend of January. Swimmers typically need an "AAA" time standard to apply.

National Reportable Time (NRT): Time standards set for both long and short courses based on previous years' top 16 achievements. Only times meeting these standards may be submitted for consideration each year. The Top 16 submitted times in each event are recognized.

Negative Split: Swimming the second half of the race equal to or faster than the first half.

Official: A judge on the deck of the pool at a sanctioned competition who enforces USAS or YMCA rules. There are stroke and turn judges, administrative officials, starters, safety marshals, and referees.

Open Water Race: A distance freestyle swimming event conducted in a natural body of water.

Pace Clock: A digital or analog clock kept on deck that is typically used to check pace or maintain intervals in practice.

Prelims: Also called preliminaries, heats, or trials, those races in which swimmers qualify for the championship and consolation finals in the events.

Paddles: Plastic plates with holes attached to the swimmer's hands by a short piece of rubber tubing. Used in practice to improve stroke technique and build strength.

Proof of Time: Meet results signed by an official that can be used for entering championship meets. Sometimes brought to another meet to show that the swimmer has swum that time if they fail to swim their entry time and do not meet the time standard for that event.

Pull Buoy: Floatation devices held between the swimmer's legs during practice for stroke and pulling drills. Often used in combination with paddles.

Referee: The lead official at a meet. He or she has authority over all other officials and enforces all rules, decides questions on the conduct of a meet, and is responsible for the efficient, safe, and effective running of a meet.

Relay: An event where a team of four swimmers is part of a single race. Sanction: Official / authorized approval from USAS or ISI to sponsor a meet.

Scratch: To withdraw an entry from competition. The proper procedure must be followed, or the swimmer could be barred from competing in their next event(s).

Seeding: Placing swimmers in order of their entry times for that event. Proper seeding will ensure swimmers in each heat will be of near or equal ability.

Senior Stat: This is the end-of-season meet on a state level for those swimmers who qualify. There are no age groups or restrictions.

Short Course: The term is designated for a 25-yard pool.

Split: The time per lap, or partial distance in an event. Coaches often record an athlete's splits at a meet or practice to help the swimmer improve pacing and race strategy. Also, the time for each of the four individuals in a relay.

Starter: The official at a meet responsible for the proper, legal, and safe start of each heat and event.

Streamline: The position used by swimmers when entering the water after starting off a block or pushing off the walls is designed to reduce water resistance.

Stretch Cords: A long band of elastic material, sometimes with handles secured on each end. It is used to exercise swimmers' arms and shoulders by looping the cord around a secure fixture, e.g., a starting block, and using the resistance to develop strength and conditioning. It can also be used in the pool, tethered to a swimmer for resisted or assisted swimming.

Stroke Judge: A certified meet official who determines the legality of swimmers' strokes. They are an official who can disqualify a swimmer during a meet for a stroke infraction.

Taper: The final preparation phase before a season-ending championship meet, where total swimming volume and intensity are reduced to produce a fast swim. Sometimes referred to as "rest."

Time Standards: Listed qualifying times that have been set by ISI, USAS, or YMCA for each event by age groups for a certain competition. The bigger the meet, the harder the time standard. Timed Finals: A meet in which each athlete swims an event once, in their assigned heat. The final places are determined by ranking the times achieved in order from slowest to fastest.

Time Trial: A time-only swim that is not part of a regular meet, or it can be a whole meet where there are no awards or places, just times recorded.

Touch Pad: The electronic device placed at the end of each lane in the water that registers the swimmer's touch and stops the clock.

Turn Judge: A certified meet official who determines the legality of swimmers' turns and finishes. They are an official who can disqualify a swimmer during a meet for a turn infraction. Unattached Swimmers: Swimmers attending meets that are not members of a participating team.

USAS United States of America Swimming, Inc.: The governing body for swimming in the US. The national headquarters is in Colorado Springs, CO.

Warm Down: Low intensity swimming used by swimmers after a race or main practice set to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

Warm Up: Low-intensity swimming is used by the swimmer before a main practice set or race to loosen muscles. A proper warm-up gradually increases heart rate, respiration, and helps prepare the body for higher levels of physical activity and to prevent injury.

Zone Meet: A multi-state Championship meet in which each state competes as a state team. In the Midwest, teams representing each state or LSC compete in the annual Zone meet, which occurs in late summer. To make the Illinois team, a swimmer must achieve an 'AAA' time in a sanctioned meet. An application must be filled out and sent to ISI to be selected.

APPENDIX D – FALCON PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

FALCON PHOTOGRAPHY POLICY

The following is a model procedure provided to assist USA Swimming member clubs who wish to develop a club photography policy. A club photography policy is not required by the Safe Sport Program, but clubs that wish to implement one may use the following as a resource.

PURPOSE

There has been much talk about whether it is safe to have images taken of children participating in sports. While the great majority of images are appropriate and are taken in good faith, it is a fact that images can be misused and children can be put at risk if commonsense procedures are not observed.

POLICY

The publishing of a photograph of a swimmer under 18, either on a notice board or in a published article or video recording (including video streaming) of swimming competitions (“publication”) should only be done with parents’ consent per the attached form.

A parent or guardian has the right to refuse to have children photographed. The exercise of this right of refusal cannot be used as grounds for refusing entry into a swimming competition. Therefore, any photo that may go to press or on a notice board, be it through a member of the club or official photographer, should receive parental consent before publishing/displaying the photo, preferably in writing. A suggested form allowing parents to indicate refusal of consent is as follows.

In the case of open meets and other competitions where the host club has an official photographer present, all parents attending should be made aware of this in your meet information. If photos are to be published anywhere, the individual parent should be allowed to withhold their consent. Their right to do so should be specifically drawn to their attention.

All photographs must observe generally accepted standards of decency, in particular:

- Action shots should be a celebration of the sporting activity and not a sexualized image in a sporting context.
- Action shots should not be taken or retained where the photograph reveals a torn or displaced swimsuit.
- Photographs should not be taken from behind swimming blocks at the start of a race or exhibit a child climbing out of the swimming pool.
- Photographs should not be taken in locker rooms or bathrooms.



PHOTOGRAPHY CONSENT FORM

Falcons swim team may wish to take photographs (individual and in groups) of swimmers under the age of 18, which may include your child during their membership in the club. All photos will be taken and published in line with club policy. The club requires parental consent to take and use photographs.

Parents/Guardians have the right to refuse consent to their child being photographed. As the parent/guardian of _____, I allow the following.

Take photographs to use on the club's secure website.

- ☐ Consent given
- ☐ Consent refused

Take photographs to include with the newspaper articles.

- ☐ Consent given
- ☐ Consent refused

Take photographs to use on club notice boards.

- ☐ Consent given
- ☐ Consent refused

Video for training purposes only.

- ☐ Consent given
- ☐ Consent refused

Signature

Date

APPENDIX E – TEAM TRAVEL POLICY

Team Travel Policy for: Bloomington-Normal YMCA Falcon Swim Team

(YMCA-specific policies follow each section in italics)

Purpose: Athletes are most vulnerable to misconduct during travel, particularly overnight stays. This includes a high risk of athlete-to-athlete misconduct. During travel, athletes are often away from their families and support networks, and the setting – new changing areas, locker rooms, workout facilities, automobiles, and hotel rooms – is less structured and less familiar.

Team Travel is defined as overnight travel to a swim meet or other team activity that is planned and supervised by the club or LSC.

Section 1 - USA Swimming Required Policies

Club and LSC travel policies must include these policies. These items are Code of Conduct stipulations in the USA Swimming Rulebook.

- a.** Club travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches, and other adults traveling with the club. (305.5.D)
- b.** Team managers and chaperones must be members of USA Swimming and have successfully passed a USA Swimming-administered criminal background check. (305.5.B)
- c.** Regardless of gender, a coach shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an athlete (unless the coach is the parent, guardian, sibling, or spouse of that particular athlete). (305.5.A)
- d.** When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, the athlete must have his/her parents' (or legal guardian's) written permission in advance to travel alone with the coach. (305.5C)

Additional approval is needed from the Senior Aquatic Director.

Section 2 – Other FALCON Swim Team Policies

- a.** Parents are responsible for travel arrangements for all meets. Falcons does not provide any travel unless written permission is obtained.
- b.** During team travel, when doing room checks, attending team meetings, and/or other activities, two-deep leadership and open and observable environments should be maintained. No coach/chaperone shall enter an athlete's room alone. Maintain two-deep leadership and keep doors open while performing a room check.
- c.** Athletes should not ride in a coach's vehicle without another adult present who is the same gender as the athlete or, at least 1 other athlete, unless prior written parental permission is obtained.
- d.** During overnight team travel, if athletes are paired with other athletes, they shall be of the same gender and should be of a similar age. Where athletes are age 13 & over, chaperones and/or team managers would ideally stay in nearby rooms. When athletes are age 12 & under, chaperones and/or team managers may stay with athletes. Where chaperones/team managers are staying in a room with athletes, they should be the same gender as the athlete, and written consent should be given by the athlete's parents (or legal guardian).
- e.** When only one athlete and one coach travel to a competition, at the competition, the coach and athlete should attempt to establish a "buddy" club to associate with during the competition and when away from the venue. This practice is not allowed by the YMCA.

- f.** To ensure the propriety of the athletes and to protect the staff, there will be no male athletes in female athletes' rooms and no female athletes in male athletes' rooms (unless the other athlete is a sibling or spouse of that particular athlete).
- g.** A copy of the Club Code of Conduct must be signed by the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian.
- h.** Team or LSC officials should obtain a signed Liability Release and/or Indemnification Form for each athlete.
- i.** Team or LSC officials should carry a signed Medical Consent or Authorization to Treat Form for each athlete.
- j.** Curfews shall be established by the team or LSC staff each day of the trip.
- k.** Team members and staff traveling with the team will attend all team functions, including meetings, practices, meals, meet sessions, etc., unless otherwise excused or instructed by the head coach or his/her designee.
- l.** The directions & decisions of coaches/chaperones are final.
- m.** Swimmers are expected to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, a restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach or chaperone.
- n.** When visiting public places such as shopping malls, movie theatres, etc., swimmers will stay in groups of no less than three persons. 12 & Under athletes will be accompanied by a chaperone.
- o.** The Head Coach or his/her designee shall make a written report of travel policy or code of conduct violations to the appropriate club or LSC leadership and the parent or legal guardian of any affected minor athlete.
- p.** The use of a hotel with interior entrances is highly recommended.
- q.** Must wear seat belts and remain seated in vehicles.
- r.** Be quiet and respect the rights of teammates and others in the hotel.
- s.** No cell phone use in locker rooms.

I have read and understand the Bloomington-Normal YMCA Falcon travel policies.

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Athlete: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX F – ACTION PLAN FOR BULLYING

FALCON POLICY: ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS BULLYING

The following is a model procedure to implement the USA Swimming rule prohibiting bullying, which is provided to assist USA Swimming member clubs in developing their procedure. USA Swimming clubs are required to have an action plan to address bullying, and the plan must be reviewed with and agreed to by all athletes, parents, coaches, and other adults at the club. If a club chooses not to, or is unable to, create a written action plan, the following model plan will become the default plan for that club, and the club will be expected to implement these procedures when reports of bullying are made. Once a customized plan is developed and approved by your club, the default plan will no longer apply. Each member club has the responsibility to approve and implement its action plan.

ACTION PLAN FOR THE BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL FALCON SWIM TEAM TO STOP BULLYING

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our club and the YMCA and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Club is committed to providing a safe, caring, and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member, or athlete/mentor.

Objectives of the Club's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that the Club will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents, and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers, and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol in case any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that Falcons take bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, that 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:

1. Causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
2. Placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
3. Creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
4. Infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
5. Materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts, and other events of a member club or LSC).

REPORTING PROCEDURE

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents.
- Talk to a Club Coach, Senior Aquatic Director
- Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Senior Aquatic Director
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled, and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. First, we get the facts.

- a. Keep all the involved children separate.
- b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- c. Listen without blaming.
- d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
- e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyberbullying. Collect all available information.

2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

- a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying.
- b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
 - What is the history between the kids involved?
 - Have there been past conflicts?
 - Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
- c. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
- d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED v

SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED

3. Support the kids who are being bullied:

- a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
- b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, fellow team members, and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
 - i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
 - ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
- c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

4. Address bullying behavior:

- a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn that their behavior is wrong and harms others.
 - b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
 - c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she was bullied. For example:
 - i. Sometimes, children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
 - ii. Other times, kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
 - d. Involve the kid who was bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
 - i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
 - ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or others in your community.
 - iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
 - e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
 - i. Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
 - ii. Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
 - f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who was bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.
- 5. Support bystanders who witness bullying:** Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.
- a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
 - b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
 - c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
 - d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
 - e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

APPENDIX G – CODE OF CONDUCT

These are the Bloomington-Normal YMCA Falcon behavior guidelines. All parents, coaches, volunteers, officials, and athletes are expected to follow this code at all practices, meets, and team functions.

1. Please follow the code of conduct at all times. Even if you are out in the community, try to set a great example of what our team is all about.
2. Follow the YMCA core values of Honesty, Caring, Respect, and Responsibility.
3. Comply with all National and Illinois area YMCA, as well as USA Swimming, rules and regulations. When competing on a national scale, know the doping control rules (USADA). You can get USADA guidelines from usaswimming.org.
4. Refrain from unsportsmanlike, indiscreet, or destructive behavior and obscene language.
5. Avoid being “guilty by association” with any people who violate this code of conduct. If there are FALCON participants not following these rules, you must immediately distance yourself, or you run the risk of being assumed you have participated as well.
6. Listen and follow the directions of your coaches, officials, and volunteers.
7. To get the highest benefit from training, participants should abstain from the use of alcohol, tobacco products, and/or other illegal or performance-enhancing drugs. Any athlete determined to have used, is in use of, or has any of the substances at any Falcons practice, meet, or other function shall be subject to suspension or dismissal from the team.

I have read and understand the Bloomington-Normal YMCA Falcon travel policies.

Parent: _____ Date: _____

Athlete: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX H – BREAKS & SHIFT SCHEDULES

1. Breaks and Rest Periods

1. For Shifts of 4 to 7.5 Hours:
 - Paid 15-minute break: One break is required after 4 hours of work.
 - Breaks must be taken away from the pool deck or instructional area to ensure mental rest.
 - If working as a lifeguard, a qualified lifeguard must be available to rotate during this break.
2. For Shifts of 7.5 Hours or More:
 - Unpaid 30-minute meal break: Must be taken no later than the 5th hour of the shift.
 - Additional 15-minute break: If the shift exceeds 8 hours, a second paid break must be provided.
3. Restroom Breaks:
 - Lifeguards and instructors may request restroom breaks as needed. Instructors must communicate with their supervisors to ensure classes are covered.

2. Shift Limits & Scheduling

1. Shift Duration:
 - The maximum shift length for part-time lifeguards and instructors is 8 hours per day.
 - Employees under 18 cannot work more than 5 consecutive days without a day off.
2. Maximum Weekly Hours:
 - Part-time employees are limited to 28 hours per week to comply with labor policies.
 - Minors (ages 16-17) are limited to 6 consecutive hours per day when school is in session and 8 hours per day when school is not in session.
3. Overtime & Rest Periods Between Shifts:
 - Employees must have at least 8 hours off between shifts.
 - Overtime work (beyond 40 hours) is generally not permitted for part-time employees.

3. Coverage & Rotations

1. Lifeguard Rotations:
 - Lifeguards must rotate every 30-45 minutes to reduce fatigue and maintain vigilance.
 - During rotations, staff will rotate between active surveillance, break shifts, and backup duties.

4. Break the Scheduling Process

1. Break Planning:
 - Supervisors are responsible for creating a break schedule before each shift to ensure breaks are staggered.
 - Staff should check in with supervisors before taking breaks to confirm coverage availability.
2. Unplanned Breaks:
 - In case of an emergency or fatigue, staff must notify the area supervisor to ensure coverage while taking an unplanned break.

5. Policy Compliance

- Failure to comply with scheduled shifts or break policies may result in disciplinary action.
- Staff are encouraged to communicate with supervisors regarding any conflicts or issues with scheduled breaks or shifts.

APPENDIX I – POOL SAFETY GUIDELINES

1. Swimwear Requirements

- Swimmers must wear dri-fit/swim-material swimwear when entering the pool.
- Aquatic shoes are permitted only in the recreation/therapy pool.
- Athletic shorts, shoes, and cotton-based clothing are not allowed while swimming.

2. Youth Supervision & Participation Guidelines

- Youth aged 14+ may use the Aquatic Center and participate in aquafit classes with intent. Horseplay is not tolerated.
- Youth aged 8-13 may participate in aquafit classes with direct supervision from a parent or guardian.
- Youth under 8 years old must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all times in the Aquatic Center.

3. Swim Test Requirements for Youth

- All youth under 16 years old must attempt the swim test to use:
 - Competition pool
 - The deep end of the therapy pool
 - Lazy river (without a lifejacket)
- Swim Test Procedure:
 - Swim one length (25 yards) without assistance, resting, or touching the pool wall.
 - Tread water for one minute to demonstrate safety skills.
- Swim Test Results:
 - Green band: Granted to youth who pass the swim test. A note will be added to their membership account, and retesting is only required if safety concerns arise.
 - Red band: Given to youth who do not pass the swim test. They must remain in shallow areas or wear a lifejacket, but may test again on subsequent visits.

4. Pool Safety Policies

- Participants must review the Illinois Department of Public Health pool safety policies posted in both pools.
- Walking is required on the pool deck at all times.
- Jumping into the pool is allowed only facing forward and feet first. No flips, spins, or backward entries.
- Diving is allowed only in the deep end of the competition pool.
- Underwater breath-holding is not permitted.
- The lifeguards' decisions are final.

5. Equipment Usage

- Personal items such as noodles, balls, or dive rings/sticks may be used.
- YMCA-owned aquafit equipment, kickboards, kicksticks, and swim school tubes are for program use only.
- Lap lanes are designated for continuous swimming or water walking.
- Do not climb on splash pad equipment, railings, lane lines, ropes, or starting blocks.

6. Food, Beverages, and Storage Policies

- Food is not permitted in the Aquatic Center.
- Water in a shatter-proof container with a lid is allowed.
- Food may be consumed only in the lobby area on the first floor.
- Bags must be stored in lockers or on wall hooks provided.

POOL SAFETY GUIDELINES CONTINUED

7. Flotation Devices Policy

- All personal flotation devices must be US Coast Guard-certified and approved by a lifeguard.
- Lifejackets in varying sizes are available upon request for participants.

Compliance & Enforcement:

- Lifeguards and staff will ensure compliance with these rules.
- Non-compliance may result in removal from the pool or facility at the discretion of Aquatic Center staff.