

**CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION
AQUATICS UNIT SWIM LEAGUE BYLAWS**

This information covers the bylaws for Swim League. If you have any further questions, please contact the Aquatics unit at the appropriate facility.

<i>BAYSIDE</i>	<i>4500 FIRST COURT ROAD</i>	<i>385-5930</i>
<i>BOW CREEK</i>	<i>3427 CLUB HOUSE RD</i>	<i>385-5960</i>
<i>GREAT NECK</i>	<i>2521 SHOREHAVEN DRIVE</i>	<i>385-5940</i>
<i>KEMPSVILLE</i>	<i>800 MONMOUTH LANE</i>	<i>385-5970</i>
<i>PRINCESS ANNE</i>	<i>1400 NIMMO PARKWAY</i>	<i>385-5950</i>
<i>SEATAACK</i>	<i>141 SOUTH BIRDNECK ROAD</i>	<i>385-5920</i>
<i>WILLIAMS FARM</i>	<i>5252 LEARNING CIRCLE</i>	<i>385-2950</i>

LEAGUE PHILOSOPHY

The Swim League offers an introduction to competitive swimming for boys and girls, ages 6-17. The league places emphasis on learning the competitive starts, strokes, and turns. It is designed for youth with little to no competitive swimming experience.

Each swimmer experiences improvement in speed, strength, and endurance by the end of the season. Swimmers improve their starts, strokes, and turns.

Coaches expose swimmers to basic competitive swimming skills and to a team environment. This is not a high-pressure swim team. Your support and enthusiasm will make the Swim League fun for all.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The age range for participation is 6 to 17 years of age. The age of the swimmer for the entire season is determined by his or her age on November 15, 2019. Swimmers must have a valid Membership Card throughout the season to participate.

Eligibility swim is a requirement to participate in swim league. After the eligibility swim, participants are placed in practices according to their ability to perform all competitive strokes.

Swimmers ages 6-10 must be able to swim:

- one length of the pool (25 meters/yards) using a good front crawl with face in water demonstrating rhythmic breathing (either to side or forward).
- one length of the pool (25 meters/yards) back crawl.

Swimmers ages 11-17 must be able to swim:

- two lengths of the pool (50 meters/yards) using a good front crawl with face in water demonstrating rhythmic breathing (either to side or forward).
- two lengths of the pool (50 meters/yards) back crawl.

Swimmers may **NOT** participate as a member of a USA swimming team as of the first day of swim league practice. Former USA swimmers must provide a release form from their USA team. In addition, Junior Varsity and Varsity high school swimmers are ineligible.

PRACTICES

Practices are held two nights a week (excluding certain holidays) in water for 1 scheduled hour in length. Practice is overseen by two to three coaches. Stretching will be offered 15 minutes before the start of each swim practice hour. Swimmers will gather together on the deck to be led in a stretching and conditioning routine to warm up and prepare for the swim portion of practice.

REGISTRATION

Registration is held on a first come first served basis. Great Neck, Bayside, Kempsville and Princess Anne each have 140 spaces. Seatack will have 120 spaces, Bow Creek 90 spaces and Williams Farm 60 spaces. In the event that all of the spaces on a team are filled, swimmers are placed on a waiting list. If dropouts occur, the spaces are filled from the waiting list. Registration for swimmers continues until the first dual meet.

LEAGUE ORGANIZATION

Our swim league is a “self-contained” or “intramural” league. All practices and meets take place at Virginia Beach Community Recreation Centers. Each team will have a practice meet and five regular season meets. The Championship Meets, the finale of the season, occur mid-February. Meet schedules are available in the parents’ packet, in the aquatic office, and on vbgov.com.

MEET CANCELLATION

In the event of center closure, due to inclement weather or emergencies, the meet will be canceled. We will:

- send out a media release to WTKR (Television - Channel 3), WVEC (Television-Channel 13), WAVY (Television-Channel 10); and the Virginian-Pilot for center closings and cancellations.
- post the information on VBgov.com/news and to [Facebook.com/VBParksRec](https://www.facebook.com/VBParksRec).
- e-mail information
- attempt to call if no e-mail contact
- option on information card to text to your cell phone for cancellations only.

If you are in doubt, please call the recreation center. If a meet must be cancelled, the make-up date will be January 18, 2020.

DUAL MEETS / AWARDS

Swimmers receive Improved Time ribbons when they improve a time during a regular season meet. All swimmers receive a meet certificate with their times the first week of practice after each meet. Heat winner ribbons are also awarded.

Coaches may choose to swim same sex relays, which will be an exhibition entry, if they do not have enough swimmers of one gender to fill a mixed relay team.

EVENTS

1. Individual
 - 8 & under 25 Free, 50 Free, 25 Breast, 100 I.M., 25 Back, 50 Back, 25 Fly
 - 9-10 25 Free, 50 Free, 25 Breast, 100 I.M., 25 Back, 50 Back, 25 Fly
 - 11-12 50 Free, 100 Free, 50 Breast, 100 I.M., 50 Back, 100 Back, 50 Fly
 - 13-17 50 Free, 100 Free, 50 Breast, 100 I.M., 50 Back, 100 Back, 50 Fly
2. Relays
 - 8 & under Mixed 100 Medley, Mixed 100 Free
 - 9-10 Mixed 100 Medley, Mixed 100 Free
 - 11-12 Mixed 200 Medley, Mixed 200 Free
 - 13-17 Mixed 200 Medley, Mixed 200 Free

RULES GOVERNING DUAL SWIM MEETS

1. Swimmers may swim five events. Only three of the five may be individual events. Coaches must enter swimmers in a minimum of two events.
2. An individual may swim up an age group but must stay in that age group for the duration of the season (Championships included).
3. Relays- A swimmer from a younger age group may be substituted into a relay for an older age group with approval from the Meet Director provided the swimmer had not exceeded the limits set forth in # 1.
4. A mixed relay may consist of two boys and two girls or one boy, three girls, or three boys and one girl.
5. Alternates/substitutes for relay team members are permitted with the approval of the Meet Referee and if the swimmer has not exceeded the limits set forth in #1.
6. No substitutions allowed after the start of the first event for all individual events without the Meet Referee's approval.
7. Each team may enter four medley relay teams and unlimited free relays. Coaches may add additional relay teams in order to fill a heat.
8. Each team may have unlimited entries in the individual Freestyle and Backstroke events, and up to twelve (12) entries in the individual Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Individual Medley events. More swimmers may

be added to Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Individual Medley events if prior agreement is made between Meet Director and Meet Referee.

9. In a case where a swimmer misses an event at no fault of their own, every effort will be made to swim them in the following heat/event provided there is space available and it is the same event. This is at the discretion of the Meet Referee.

RULES GOVERNING TIME TRIALS

1. Swimmers may swim every individual event in their age group.
2. Swimmers may not swim in a higher age group at time trials, unless they are swimming up in that age group for the entire season.
3. Relays are not swum during time trials.

RULES GOVERNING CHAMPIONSHIP MEETS

Swimmers must have participated in 2 swim meets and received 1 legal time at a dual meet to compete in said event at Championships. (Time trials counts as a meet swum, but not for a legal time)

STROKE GUIDELINES

In accordance with USA Swimming 2019 Technical Rules Article 101 - Individual Strokes & Relays

DISQUALIFICATIONS

Shall be in accordance with USA Swimming 2019

STARTS

Forward Start

- Referee signals the swimmers with a series of short whistles (no fewer than 4) to approach the blocks and prepare to swim.
- Announcer/Starter announces the event/distance/heat
- When all swimmers have approached the blocks, referee blows a long whistle for the heat to step onto the blocks and/or take their preparatory positions
- Once all swimmers are on the blocks the referee turns the heat over to the starter
- When all swimmers are prepared, the starter says "Take your mark"
- When swimmers have assumed the correct starting position and are stationary, starter activates the starting signal

Backstroke Start

- Referee signals the swimmers with a series of short whistles (no fewer than 4) to approach the blocks and prepare to swim.
- Announcer/Starter announces the event/distance/heat
- Referee blows a long whistle for the heat to step into the water

- When all swimmers have surfaced, referee blows a second long whistle to have swimmers return to the wall and assume their starting positions
- Once all swimmers are in position the referee turns the heat over to the starter
- When all swimmers are prepared, the starter says “Take your mark”

When swimmers have assumed the correct starting position and are stationary, starter activates the starting signal

Butterfly, breaststroke, and freestyle are started with a front dive from the starting blocks or the deck of the pool. Backstroke is started in the water with the swimmers facing the starting end of the pool. There will be no ankle holding on the backstroke starts.

False starts will be called for the following:

1. A swimmer who unnecessarily delays in assuming and holding a motionless starting position after the command "take your mark" shall be charged with a false start.
2. All swimmers leaving their marks before the starting signal is given shall be charged with a false start, except that the starter may, at his discretion, relieve a swimmer who has false started because of the action or movement of another competitor, of the responsibility for the false start and charge it only to the offender.
3. When a swimmer commits a false start before the starting signal is given, the starter shall immediately release all other swimmers with the command "Stand Up." Any swimmer who enters the water (or backstroke swimmer who leaves the starting area) shall be charged with a false start. The starter may relieve a swimmer who would otherwise be charged with a false start if the starter believes that it was caused by the swimmer's reaction to the command.
4. **If the starting signal has been given before the disqualification is declared, the race shall continue without recall.** If the Referee independently observes and confirms the starter's observation that a violation occurred, the swimmers who have false started shall be notified of the disqualification upon completion of the race.
5. In backstroke or medley relay, the starter may charge a false start to any swimmer who fails to maintain his feet and/or hands in a legal position after the first warning.

TIMING

Place and time will be determined according to the following: 1.) Automatic Timing System, 2.) Semi Automatic Timing System (buttons), 3.) Manual Timing System (watches).

MEET DIRECTOR

1. Shall have full authority over the operations of the meet.
2. Oversees entry process and the general running of the meet.
3. Responsible for the assignment of all personnel to their appropriate stations.

REFEREE

1. Shall have full authority over all officials and shall assign and instruct them; shall enforce all applicable rules and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet. Can overrule any meet official on a point of rule interpretation, or on a judgment decision pertaining to an action, which he has personally observed; shall also disqualify a swimmer for any violation of the rules that he personally observes and shall at the same time raise one hand overhead with open palm.
2. Protests against judgment decisions of the stroke and turn judges can only be considered by the referee of the meet.
3. Must receive and initial all DQ cards before they are delivered to the scorer. When the referee disqualifies a swimmer, he only needs to initial the form once. He/She will make every effort to inform the swimmer's coach of the violation.

STARTER

1. Shall be stationed within ten feet of the starting end of the pool. The electronic strobe shall be clearly visible to all timers and the starting horn shall be audible to all the starting positions.
2. Must start events in accordance to procedure, as stated in the stroke guideline under starts. (The two false start rule is in effect.)
3. Can award false start disqualifications as appropriate.

STROKE JUDGE

Shall operate on both sides of the pool, preferably walking with the swimmers during all strokes; shall insure that the rules relating to the style of swimming designated for the event are being observed, including the turns. Shall report any violation by raising his/her hand to the referee and filling out a DQ card, which details the event, the heat number, the lane number, and the infraction.

TURN JUDGE

Shall operate on the shallow end of the pool; shall ensure that when turning, the swimmer complies with the turning rules applicable to the stroke used. Shall report any violation by raising his/her hand to the referee and filling out a DQ card, which details the event, the heat number, lane number, and the infraction observed.

JURISDICTION OF STROKE AND TURN JUDGES

Before the competition begins, the referee shall determine the respective areas of stroke and turn responsibility and jurisdiction, which may include joint, concurrent, and coordinated responsibility and jurisdiction. The referee shall insure that all swimmers shall have fair, equitable, and uniform conditions of judging. Ex: Stroke Judge will watch closest four lanes on each side of pool. Turn Judge all lanes on their end of pool. (The Turn Judge will also stroke judge the middle two lanes.)

DISQUALIFICATION (DQ) PROCEDURES FOR OFFICIALS

1. Raise hand signaling an infraction.
2. Fill in and initial DQ Card at the end of the heat.
3. Before the beginning of the next heat, make sure that the referee has received the DQ Card.
4. It is the referee's responsibility to question the official about the DQ to confirm the swimmer did commit an infraction. If the referee does not agree with the official or, the official cannot explain the infraction to their satisfaction, the DQ will be revoked.
5. Coaches will provide the disqualified swimmer with an explanation of the infraction at the next swim practice.

INFRACTION SIGNAL

Upon observing an infraction within his/her jurisdiction, stroke and turn judges shall immediately raise one hand overhead with open palm.