



**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.

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

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, 2020. Swimmers must have a valid membership 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, high school swimmers are ineligible.

LEAGUE ORGANIZATION

Our swim league is a “self-contained” or “intramural” league. All practices and meets take place at Virginia Beach Community Recreation Centers. Teams will participate in clinics this year. A championship meet will not be held this season. Clinic schedules are available on our [league website](#).

REGISTRATION

Registration is held on a first come-first served basis. Great Neck, Bayside, and Princess Anne each have 64 spaces. Kempsville and Seatack will have 48 spaces, Bow Creek 32 spaces and Williams Farm 24 spaces. If all the spaces on a team are full, 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 regular swim meet of the season.

REFUNDS

Refunds will be provided if participant is unable to meet minimum qualifications. The deadline to request a refund is November 22, 2020. High school swimming starts mid-December. Refunds will not be provided to those who switch to participate in high school swimming. We recommend registering for the High School Pre-Season Conditioning program which is held throughout the City.

RULES GOVERNING RETURN TO PARTICIPATION

Swimmers who experience onset of illness or injury require a physician’s note in order to return to participation. If onset of either happens during practice, swimmer will be removed from practice and placed in isolation (depending on signs and symptoms) and observed/monitored until parents arrive and take swimmer home and/or to physician.

PRACTICES

Practices are held two nights a week (excluding certain holidays) in water for 60-minutes in length. Practice is overseen by one to three coaches. Stretching will not be offered 15 before the start of each swim practice. Stretches are available on our [league website](#) once practices begin. Members of the same household may practice during the same hours. Swimmers will not be permitted to move between practice hours this year.

CANCELLATIONS

In the event of center closure, due to inclement weather or emergencies, the practice, clinic, or 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
- 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 clinic/meet must be cancelled, no make-up will be offered this year.

CLINICS

Due to COVID related restrictions in the area, clinics will be held in place of meets. Clinics will be held at either Bayside, Great Neck and/or Princess Anne once a month for each team. Focus will be determined by coaches and Team Representative. No registration required. No additional fee.

AWARDS

Swimmers receive electronic or digital Improved Time awards when they improve a time during a meet. All swimmers receive a meet certificate with their times the first week of practice after each “meet week or clinic”. Heat winner and Improved Time ribbons will not be awarded this year. Relays will not be swum this season.

EVENTS

Individual mixed gender events:

10 & under	25 Free, 50 Free, 25 Breast, 100 I.M., 25 Back, 50 Back, 25 Fly
11-17	50 Free, 100 Free, 50 Breast, 100 I.M., 50 Back, 100 Back, 50 Fly

RULES GOVERNING SWIM MEETS

1. Swimmers may swim up to three (3) events. Coaches must enter swimmers in a minimum of two (2) events.
2. An individual may swim up an age group but must stay in that age group for the duration of the season.
3. No substitutions allowed after the start of the first event for all individual events without the Meet Referee’s approval.
4. Each team may have unlimited entries in the individual Freestyle and Backstroke events, and up to eight (8) 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.

5. 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.

STARTS

Forward Start - Butterfly, breaststroke, and freestyle are started with a front dive from the starting blocks or the deck of the pool.

- 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 - Backstroke is started in the water with the swimmers facing the starting end of the pool.

- 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 blast 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. Ankle holding will not be permitted on backstroke starts.
- 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.

False starts will be called for the following:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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 (button), **3.) Manual Timing System (stopwatch).**

OFFICIALS

Meet Director

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

Referee

- 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.
- Protest judgment decisions of the stroke and turn judges can only be considered by the referee of the meet.
- 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. They will make every effort to inform the swimmer's coach of the violation.

Starter

- 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.
- Must start events in accordance to procedure, as stated in the stroke guideline under starts. (The two false start rule is in effect.)
- Can award false start disqualifications as appropriate.

Stroke and Turn 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. Turn judging 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, the lane number, and the infraction. This season, coaches will act in the capacity of stroke and turn judges.

Jurisdiction of Stroke and Turn Officials

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.)

Stroke Guidelines and Disqualifications

In accordance with USA Swimming 2020 Technical Rules Article 101 - Individual Strokes & Relays

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.

VOLUNTEERS

Swim meets are only successful because of its volunteers. Parents are required to volunteer throughout the season. Volunteer opportunities are timers, runners, clerk of course and officials.

COVID ADDENDUM

Swimmers and parents entering the facility will be required to adhere to Virginia Beach Parks and Recreation's policies and procedures related to health and safety. These include the following:

1. Masks are required on deck, in locker room or other areas of facility for everyone who is 10 years or older.
2. Only participants are permitted in the pool area while under specific state restrictions. Accommodations may be requested.
3. Hand sanitizer is available while entering and exiting facility.
4. All participants and their parents or guardians are required to follow the flow of traffic in the recreation center.
5. Check-in is required. At check-in, please be prepared to provide your full name and phone number. In addition, each person entering the center will be required to answer several COVID or wellness screening questions. Anyone answering yes to any of the following questions will not be permitted to enter the recreation center:
 - a. Ask the individual if they have any of the following symptoms?
 - i. Cough OR at least TWO of these symptoms:
 - ii. Shortness of breath
 - iii. Fever
 - iv. Chills
 - v. Repeated shaking with chills
 - vi. Muscle pain
 - vii. Headache
 - viii. Sore throat
 - ix. New loss of taste or smell
 - x. Vomiting
 - xi. Diarrhea
 - b. Have you been in contact with anyone with the previously stated symptoms?
 - c. Have you had any close contact in the last 14 days with someone with a diagnosis of COVID-19?
6. Physical distancing is required by all participants, parents, and staff. Parents/Guardians should educate their swimmers about proper physical distancing and remind swimmers to adhere to the guidelines while participating in the program and its related events.
7. If your swimmer is experiencing any signs or symptoms of an illness, keep them home. Should your swimmer show signs or symptoms of an illness while participating in the program, your swimmer will be isolated in a pre-designated area and observed/monitored until they have been picked up by a parent/guardian.
8. Return to participation after an illness will require swimmer to be cleared by a physician. Missed practices or events will not be made up.