



North Carolina Swimming Return to Operations Best Practices

Please note that the Governor's executive orders, CDC/OSHA guidelines, and ordinances in force with counties, local municipalities, and individual facilities should be followed at all times and, if stricter, overrule any contradictory guidance provided here.

These best practices are presented solely as guidelines for NC Swimming member clubs to plan and conduct safer practices during NC's recovery phases from the COVID-19 pandemic. Clubs should review these best practices to confirm that they are most appropriate and complete for their organization and facilities. Clubs may prefer to enact their own guidelines as long as they comply with CDC guidelines and with national, state, and local orders. Clubs may be further constrained by internal policies or by additional requirements at individual facilities.

These best practices are based on information available as of May 1, 2020. Coaches should also review and share with facilities the USA Swimming Facility Reopening Planning guidelines available at <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/community-quarantine-resources>.

NCS Clubs should use these resources and work with facility operators to develop their specific plans and to ensure acceptable protections can be provided for swimmers, coaches, facility staff, parents, and the general public. Taking a proactive hand in maximizing safety will reassure coaches, facilities, and families that strict precautions will be observed.

Be sure to thoroughly communicate protocols, rules, and expected behavior to swimmers and their parents. Consider requiring a supplemental waiver/release and safety code of conduct of all swimmers and parents prior to participating in practices. A customizable template, which should be reviewed by your club's legal representative, is available on the www.SwimNC.com website.

- Remind swimmers not to come to practice if they 1) have had COVID-19 and do not have a doctor's note permitting them to return to practice, 2) do not feel well, 3) have a temperature above 100.00°F *, 4) have been around anyone who has had COVID-19 in the past two weeks, feels ill, or has a fever, 5) traveled but not completed the two-week self-quarantine period recommended by the CDC or required by state mandate.
- *Strongly recommended:* An impartial, masked adult, preferably a club staff member, should check coaches' and swimmers' temperatures with a no touch infrared thermometer at the entrance to the pool. People with temperatures greater than 100.00°F should not be allowed into the pool. *
- Appropriate social distancing guidelines must be observed at all times between swimmers and other swimmers, swimmers and coaches, and all other facility occupants and swimmers/coaches. During physical activities, aim for 10 feet of social distance to account for increased respirations.
- Clearly identify direct pathways from the entrance to the pool/bathrooms and to the exit. Restrict access to all other parts of the facility.
- Coaches should wear face coverings regardless of social distance.
- Ensure that practice group size complies with the Governor's latest definition of a "group" according to the phase that is in effect at the state level.



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- In phases when group sizes are strictly limited, work with the parents to provide options for open, observable, interruptible practices in accordance with the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy. If facility access is the only option available to achieve this, set a designated spectator area well away from swimmer groups. If the area is not far enough away from practice groups to comply with NC group separation requirements in effect at the time, you should include spectators in your group count and limit swimmers accordingly. You may limit the number of spectators allowed to one per family.
- Any parents permitted to enter the facility should make the same declarations as swimmers regarding their health and, ideally, have their temperatures checked at the door. If permitted to enter, parents must wear face coverings at all times, remain in the designated area at all times, and observe social distancing requirements at all times. Facilities should include any spectator areas in their cleaning schedule.
- Plan 15 minutes between practices to ensure that the first group vacates the facility before the second group enters and that any required cleaning can occur. Prohibit congregating at the door so entering and exiting groups do not meet or, if possible, establish separate, clearly labeled doors for entering and exiting.
- Before, during, or after practice, swimmers and parents may not congregate on deck, in lobbies or bathrooms, at entrances/exits, or in parking lots. Work out a minimal contact drop off/pick up plan with parents prior to starting practices and monitor to ensure compliance.
- Swimmers should be prohibited from using the locker rooms for changing or showering. Swimmers should shower at home and arrive clean and dressed to swim. They should leave without changing out of their suits.
- Limit bathroom access to one person at a time.
- Limit the items swimmers can bring into the pool to the absolute essentials—cap, goggles, towel, water bottle— to avoid contact transmission risks. Consider practices that do not require use of equipment. Do not use communal training equipment. Do not use water fountains and ask facilities to turn off or block access. Do not store personal items at the pool.
- Outlaw spitting on decks, in gutters, in the water, in the parking lot, and on the grounds.
- Assign and utilize practice lanes to maximize distance between individual swimmers and maintain 8-10 feet of social distance when swimmers are resting. Refer to the USA Swimming guide for configuration ideas.
- Swimmers should avoid contact with starting blocks, backstroke grips, bleachers, tables, chairs, guard stands, railings, and other surfaces that have not been or cannot be sanitized.
- Dryland should not be conducted on the indoor pool deck unless a clean, safe area large enough to permit minimum social distancing of 10 feet can be designated. Outdoor dryland should also follow 10 feet social distancing guidelines. Communal mats and equipment should not be used.
- Prior to beginning practices, understand the facility's sanitation plan and restrictions and communicate them clearly to parents and swimmers. Confirm that facilities are following appropriate cleaning guidelines between groups and after groups as recommended by the CDC and your local health departments.
- Clubs should develop a contingency plan in the situation that a swimmer, coach, or family member contracts COVID-19. Best practices for this occurrence will be provided shortly.



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*Temperature recheck procedures according to the CDC guidelines:

- If an individual's temperature is higher than 100.00°F, recheck in 5 minutes.
- Have the person sit down outside the entrance. No eating or drinking is permitted during this time.
- If the rechecked temperature is still above 100.00°F, the person may not come into the facility and may not return until they have been fever-free for three days without the use of fever reducing medication.
- If the rechecked temperature is below 100.00°F, allow the swimmer to practice or the spectator to enter but maximize their separation from all other people in the facility.