

Diamond State Aquatics Team Handbook 2026-2027



Table of Contents

Section A - Introduction

Welcome	3
Mission Statement	4

Section B - Team Programs

DSA Practice Groups.....	5
Practice Group Move Up Policy.....	8

Section C - Pricing and Billing

Team Billing.....	9
Types of Fees.....	10
Fee Structure.....	13

Section D - Swim Meets

USA Swimming Classifications.....	14
Types of Swim Meets.....	15
Meet Schedule.....	18
Entering Swim Meets.....	19
Entry Fees and Surcharges.....	20
Expected Behavior at Swim Meets.....	21
Meet Volunteering.....	22

Section E - Swimmer Roles

Swimmers' Bill of Rights.....	24
Swimmers' Responsibilities.....	25
Practice Policies.....	26
Practice Code of Conduct.....	27
Required Equipment.....	28

Section F - Coach Roles

Coaches' Bill of Rights.....	29
Coaches' Responsibilities	30

Section G - Parent Roles

Guide to Being a Good Swim Parent.....	31
Observing Practices.....	32
Communication.....	33

Appendices

A- Terms and Conditions for Participation.....	34
B- Parent Code of Conduct.....	35
C- Swimmer Code of Conduct.....	36
D- Team Travel Commitment Policy.....	37



Welcome

Welcome to Diamond State Aquatics! We look forward to working with your swimmer(s) to improve their technical skills, enhance their conditioning, and encourage them along their swimming careers. Our year-round program offers instruction, training, and competition to athletes interested in taking their swimming to the next level.

Diamond State Aquatics (DSA) was established in the Spring of 2021 and has grown into a formidable team in Delaware and the Middle Atlantic LSC. DSA competes in local, regional, and national competitions sanctioned by USA Swimming, the national governing body for amateur swimming in this country.

This handbook will help familiarize you with the Diamond State Aquatics program and with competitive swimming in general. The handbook outlines our team philosophy, our program policies, and the basic information concerning your day-to-day participation in the Diamond State Aquatics program. It is our hope that this handbook will help you better understand and enjoy your family's participation with our program.



Mission Statement

At Diamond State Aquatics, it is our mission to:

Provide swimmers with a safe and supportive atmosphere to develop as swimmers, teammates, and young adults.

Foster a tight-knit community through the leadership of the coaching staff.

Provide equal opportunities for all our swimmers to succeed individually and as a team.

Instill a lifelong passion for swimming in all of our athletes.



DSA Practice Groups

Bronze Group (Ages 8 and Under)

September to May

Offered at: Middletown & Wilmington

The Bronze Group is an introduction to competitive swimming. Practices will focus on learning the mechanics of the competitive strokes and introduce the fundamentals of endurance and racing. Participants are expected to be legal in Freestyle and Backstroke and able to complete a 50 Freestyle and 50 Backstroke.

Practices Offered: 4 per week

Suggested Attendance: 2-3 per typical week

Silver Group (Ages 9-10)

September to May

Offered at: Middletown & Wilmington

The Silver Group is designed to advance athletes' abilities as they develop into competitive swimmers. Practices will refine mechanics for all four competitive strokes, turns, and starts while building endurance and racing skills. Participants must be legal in Freestyle and Backstroke and should be legal in Breaststroke and Butterfly. Swimmers must be able to complete a 100 Freestyle and a 100 Backstroke.

Practices Offered: 3 per week

Suggested Attendance: 2-3 per typical week



DSA Practice Groups

Gold I & II Groups (Ages 11-12)

September to May (Summer Option Available)

Offered at: Middletown & Wilmington

The Gold I & II groups are designed to expand a swimmer's development with increased training intensity. Practices will focus on endurance training while building on mechanics and racing technique. Athletes begin to learn how to set attainable goals and the steps needed to achieve them. Coaches will place swimmers into Gold I or Gold II based on ability and commitment.

Practices Offered: 5 per week

Gold I Suggested Attendance: 3-4 per typical week

Gold II Required Attendance: 4 per typical week

Junior I & II Groups (Ages 13-14)

September to May (Summer Option Available)

Offered at: Middletown & Wilmington

The Junior I & II groups are designed to prepare athletes for senior level swimming. Training will have a balanced emphasis on conditioning, competitive racing, and stroke mechanics. Dry-land training will be incorporated to improve core stability, flexibility, and injury prevention. Coaches will place swimmers into Junior I or Junior II based on ability and commitment.

Practices Offered: 5 per week

Junior I Suggested Attendance: 3-4 per typical week

Junior II Required Attendance: 4 per typical week



DSA Practice Groups

Senior Group (Ages 15-19)

September to July

Offered at: Middletown & Wilmington

The Senior Group is for swimmers that enjoy the sport and aim to be competitive on a local level. Training is endurance-based with mechanics, stroke instruction, and a focus on refining racing techniques. Swimmers will continue to build on dry-land training with a focus on core stability, flexibility, and injury prevention. Coaches will assist the swimmers in goal setting with an encouragement to move into the Senior Elite Group if desired.

Practices Offered: 5/6 per week

Suggested Attendance: 4-5 per typical week

Senior Elite Group (Ages 15-19)

September to July

Offered at: Wilmington Only

The Senior Elite Group is the top training group in the program. The group is designed for swimmers aspiring to reach the highest levels of competitive swimming. Training will be primarily conditioning based with an emphasis on competitive racing, while also focusing on proper mechanics and individualized stroke guidance. Dry-land training will be heavily incorporated into the program with an emphasis on core stability, flexibility, and injury prevention. Coaches will discuss goal setting, proper nutrition, and time management to develop a well-rounded athlete. Placement into this group requires coach's approval.

Practices Offered: 8 per week

Required Attendance: 80% average



Practice Group Move-Up Policy

Moving a swimmer to a new group is a joint discussion between the swimmer, the parents, the coach of their current group, and the coach of their intended new group. DSA coaches have final discretion over the timing and placement of swimmer move-ups.

The DSA practice groups are set up to bring together swimmers in the same age group who compete against each other at meets. When looking to move-up swimmers to the next group, coaches focus on the swimmer's next "championship meet". Typical championship meets are in December, March, and July. The best time for swimmers to move-up a group is immediately following one of these meets.

A swimmer is eligible to move up to the next group when their next championship meet will be in the next age group up. For example: At the start of the season, Swimmer Johnny is 10 years old and is in the Silver group. His birthday is February 1st. Because Swimmer Johnny will be 11 years old for the March championship meets, he is eligible to move up to the Gold I or II groups immediately following his December championship meet. However, he has the option to continue with the Silver group through March. After a discussion between him, his parents, and his coaches, Swimmer Johnny will either move up in December, or wait until after his championship meet in March.



Team Billing

1. Members will register for each season online at www.diamondstateaquatics.com. The system will create an account for you with the email address you provide at registration. This account gives a member access to their billing summaries, invoices, charges, and payments, as well as other information on their swimmer's progress.
2. Members are required to enter a Bank Card or Credit Card to their account that will automatically be processed for Practice Dues on the 1st of each month. Cash and Checks are NOT allowed for payment.
3. Meet Fees, Team Travel Fees, and other charges will be charged to the card on file AS THEY ARE ADDED TO YOUR ACCOUNT.
4. Members may charge Apparel, Equipment, and Events to their account with the expectation that they will be paid through the card on file as they are added to your account.
5. Members can always view their past, current, and anticipated invoices by logging into their account.
6. Members will continue to be charged each month for the duration of the program unless a cancellation in writing is sent to swimoffice@diamondstateaquatics.com one week prior to being charged on the 1st of the month. Failure to submit this cancelation in writing prior to the 1st of the month will result in the next month being charged.
7. There shall be no proration of program dues for members ending a month early, except in the case of a serious documented medical issue. This would need to be approved by the Program Director.



Types of Fees

Program Dues: The program dues are based on the program group in which a swimmer is enrolled.

Annual Registration Fee: There is a \$50 per swimmer annual DSA Registration fee (\$25 per subsequent swimmer). This fee covers administrative costs for the season.

Team Activities Fee: There is a \$50 per swimmer annual DSA Team Activities fee. This fee covers team caps, a team t-shirt, and team events for the season.

Late Fees: If a member's account is not paid by the 10th of the current month a \$10 fee will be applied to the account.

Insufficient Funds/Denied Credit Card: A fee of \$10 will be applied to the account if charges fail to process on the 1st of the month.

Late Cancellation Fee: DSA does not require members to commit to annual contracts. However, cancellation requires written notice at least one week prior to the 1st of the month. Failure to notify DSA in advance will result in a \$50 Late Cancellation Fee.

Reinstatement Fee: Any athlete who has registered during the current season, but cancelled for a non-medical reason, will be charged a \$50 Reinstatement Fee to come back during the same season, only when space is available in the group.

Suspension of membership is allowed only in the case of a serious documented medical issue.



Types of Fees

The following fees are meet related and paid directly to Diamond State Aquatics:

Meet Individual/Relay Entry Fee: A swimmer is charged for each event they swim in at a meet. The meet may also include a facility surcharge per swimmer by the hosting team. Swimmers participating in relays will be charged ¼ of the cost of the relay. These fees are set by the meet host.

Meet Coaching Fees: Coaching fees will be applied to each swimmers' account in the amount of \$10 for 1-day swim meets, \$20 for 2-day meets, or \$30 for 3-day or longer meets. The fee is based on the length of the entire meet and not the days a swimmer actually attends. Championship meets may incur additional fees for championship specific apparel.

Team Travel: When team members travel as a group, the costs of transportation, accommodation, and meals are split between the swimmers. This fee is due prior to leaving for the meet. A separate confirmation form will be sent home or emailed to the swimmers' guardians for payment.

MA Travel Assistance: Some meets qualify for MA reimbursements. These requests are made by the club to our LSC and the club will distribute the reimbursements once received. The club will retain a percentage of each reimbursement to cover part of the coaches' travel costs.



Types of Fees

The following fees are paid directly to USA Swimming online, NOT to Diamond State Aquatics: Families are required to set up a USA Swimming SWIMS account to register and pay the following fees. Instructions will be sent to new families.

USA Swimming Registration Fee: All swimmers are required to pay a \$90 fee to USA Swimming annually. This will establish the swimmer's amateur status as a competitive swimmer, as well as provide insurance coverage during swim practice and meets.

USA Swimming Transfer Fee: Transfers from another USA Club are required to pay a \$10 transfer fee to USA Swimming. The transfer fee applies for athletes transferring from one club to another or from Unattached to a club.



Fee Structure

Program Dues	Monthly Cost
Bronze	\$135
Silver	\$160
Gold I & II	\$185
Junior I & II	\$210
Senior	\$235
Senior Elite	\$260

Program Dues Discounts:

- * Additional swimmers in a family receive a 5% discount
- * DuPont CC Members receive a 15% discount

Fee	Amount	Charge Date
Program Dues	Group dependent	1st of each month
Registration Fee	\$50/\$25	At registration
Team Activities Fee	\$50	At registration
Meet Entry Fees	Meet dependent	2-3 days after meet completed
Meet Coaching Fee	\$10/\$20/\$30	2-3 days after meet completed
Late Fee (Not paid by 10th of month)	\$10	Added to account on 10th of the month
Credit Card Denied/Expired	\$10	Added to account when occurs
Late Cancellation Fee	\$50	Added to account when occurs
Reinstatement Fee	\$50	Added to account when occurs

If you have any questions about billing or your DSA account, please contact the administrative staff at swimoffice@diamondstateaquatics.com



USA Swimming Classifications

AGE GROUPS

There are different age group classifications recognized by USA Swimming: 8 & Under, 9-10 (sometimes 10 & U), 11-12, 13-14, 15-16, 17-18, and Open. The Open classification includes registered swimmers of any age who has achieved the qualifying time for the event. Not all age group classifications are offered at every swim meet. The swimmers age on the first day of a meet will govern the swimmers age for the entire meet.

Swimmers ages 8 & Under are referred to as “Mini” swimmers. Swimmers ages 9-14 are referred to as “Age Group” swimmers. Swimmers ages 15-18 are referred to as “Senior” swimmers. Some meets will use the term “Developmental” to refer to 10 & Under swimmers.

MOTIVATIONAL TIMES

Within each age group, there are different nationally recognized levels of achievement based on times. These times are designed to help swimmers better understand their times and to set realistic goal times for their future. The classifications are “C”, “B”, “BB”, “A”, “AA”, “AAA”, and “AAAA”. The times required for each ability level are published each year by USA Swimming. This permits fair, yet challenging, competition on all levels.

In some cases, a swimmer may be in a different class in each stroke. An example: a “C” breaststroke time, a “B” freestyle time, and an “AA” backstroke time. Some swim meets set certain qualification standards. In order to swim in a certain classification, a swimmer must have achieved the qualifying time for that particular classification.



Types of Swim Meets

Non-Qualifying Meets

A/BB/C Meets: Swim meet with 3 divisions. This type of meet includes every ability level of swimmer from novice to very experienced.

Invitational Meets: These competitions may be open to any USA Swimming registered team from anywhere in the United States, while others may be limited to only teams that are specifically invited. These types of meets typically range from 1 to 4 days and can feature a prelim-final format or timed finals.

Championship and Qualifying Meets

Middle Atlantic 10 & Under Championships: 10 & Under Championships are held once a year; in March in a 25-yard pool. This meet is the championship meet for all 10 & Under swimmers.

Middle Atlantic Silver Championships: Silver Championships are held twice a year; March in a 25-yard pool, July in a 50-meter pool. This meet is the championship meet for Age Group and Senior swimmers who do not achieve qualifying times for Junior Olympics or Senior Championships.

Middle Atlantic Junior Championships: Junior Championships are held twice a year; March in a 25-yard pool, July in a 50-meter pool. This is the highest level qualifying meet for Age Group swimmers in our region.



Types of Swim Meets

Middle Atlantic Senior Championships: Middle Atlantic Senior Championships are held twice a year; March in a 25-yard pool, July in a 50-meter pool. This is the highest level qualifying meet for Senior swimmers within the Middle Atlantic LSC.

Eastern Zone Age Group Championships (Zones): Zones are held at the end of the winter and summer seasons for select Age Group swimmers for LSCs within the Eastern Zone. At Summer Zones, Middle Atlantic compiles a team of its fastest swimmers to compete against other LSCs in the Eastern Zone, and these swimmers compete under Middle Atlantic (not DSA). Parents are responsible for sending in the application for their swimmer in a timely manner.

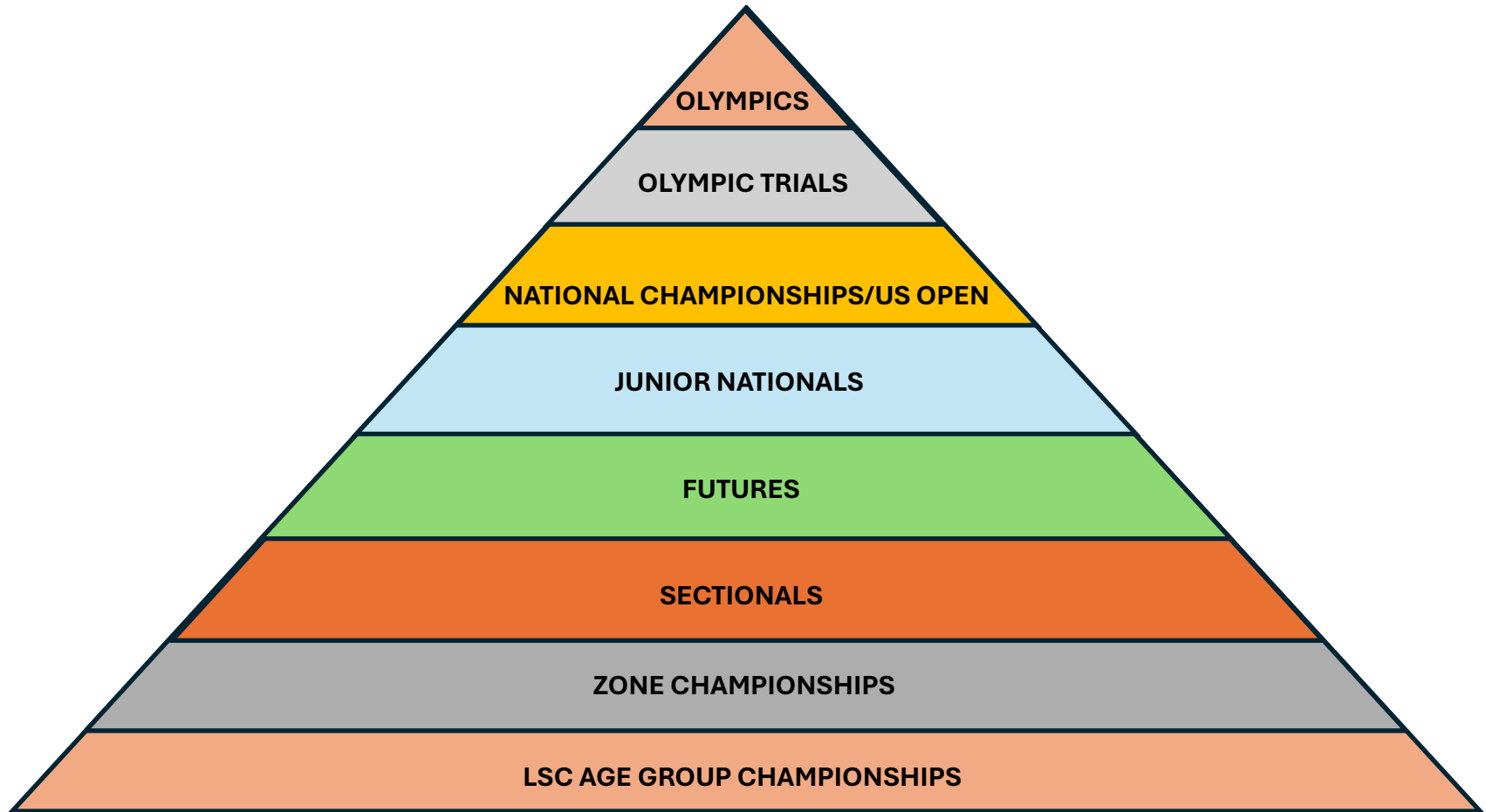
Eastern Zone Sectionals (or Senior Zone Championships): Sectionals are held multiple times per year and is the highest level qualifying meet within the Eastern Zone. The qualifying times for this meet are faster than Middle Atlantic Senior Championships. The Eastern Zone comprises of 12 LSCs spanning from Virginia to Maine.

USA Swimming Futures Championships: Futures are held once per year in the summer in a 50-meter pool. There are five Futures meets across the country that are spaced out regionally. The qualifying times for this meet are faster than Eastern Zone Sectionals.

USA Swimming Junior National Championships: Junior Nationals are typically held twice per year; December in a 25-yard pool, July in a 50-meter pool. This is the highest level qualifying meet in the country specifically for 18 & Under swimmers. The qualifying times for this meet are faster than Futures.



Types of Swim Meets



Meet Schedule

The tentative meet schedule is posted on our website at the beginning of each swim year. We typically plan for one meet per month, but this may be more frequent during championship seasons.

1. The meet schedule has been established with the expectation that swimmers will attend every meet available at their classification level, both locally and out of town. We do not schedule a meet unless we feel it is important to participate.
2. The coaching staff reserves the right to make the final decision concerning meets DSA swimmers will attend.
3. All DSA swimmers, regardless of age or ability level, will train with the intention of competing in a season-ending championship meet. We highly encourage all athletes to make the commitment to participate at the highest level meet for which they have achieved qualifying times.
4. Meets that a swimmer wishes to attend outside of the DSA schedule must be approved by the swimmer's lead coach.



Entering Swim Meets

HOW TO ENTER A SWIMMER INTO A MEET

The meet entry process begins online at www.diamondstateaquatics.com. Once logged into the Captyn website, simply click on the **MEETS** tab and click on the meet you want to declare for. Review the meet information and the attached PDFs, then click your swimmers name at the bottom. From there, you will select “Opt In” and then proceed to choose your events, or select “Opt Out” if you cannot attend. Click Save!

The coaching staff will designate a meet sign-up deadline. We ask that ALL SWIMMERS and PARENTS abide by this deadline. The deadline is established to provide the coaches an opportunity to review the meet entry for any mistakes or potential changes. If a swimmer forgets to enter a meet in which they should participate, please notify the coach immediately. If space is available and the meet director is willing, a late entry may be permitted, but there are no guarantees. The fee is usually double the normal entry fee and must be paid to the meet administrator on the pool deck by the swimmer.

ULTIMATELY THE DSA COACHING STAFF RESERVES THE RIGHT, AT ALL TIMES, TO ALTER ANY SWIMMER’S MEET ENTRY. The coaching staff is best equipped to understand the competitive needs of the athletes and will make all decisions based on what is in the athlete’s best interests.



Entry Fees and Surcharges

Each event a swimmer enters at a swim meet carries an entry fee, also known as meet fee. The meet host determines the amount that the swimmer is charged for each event. This fee can range from \$5 to \$15 per race.

In addition to the meet fee for each individual event, the hosting team may require a surcharge or facility fee for each swimmer participating in the meet.

Relays fee range from \$10 to \$25 per relay; relay participants will be charged $\frac{1}{4}$ of the relay entry.

Meet entry fees and surcharges are due to the hosting team prior to the start of the swim meet. DSA, on behalf of its entered swimmers, pays the fees upfront and ahead of each individual member's account being charged. **Once the entry and payment has been sent to the hosting team there will be NO refunds for meet fees for any reason, even if you have to scratch from the meet.** Meet fees will appear on your account following the conclusion of the meet and will be charged on the 1st of the following month.

Coaching fees go towards the cost of staffing and travel for the DSA coaches. Staffing is determined based on the number of swimmers entered into the meet. Coaching fees will appear on your account following the conclusion of the meet and will be charged on the 1st of the following month. **Once the entry and payment has been sent to the hosting team there will be NO refunds for coaching fees if you have to scratch from the meet, except for medical circumstances that prevent the swimmer from attending the meet.** Written notice must be sent to the swimmer's lead coach prior to the meet should there be a medical reason to scratch from the meet.



Expected Behavior at Swim Meets

1. Always remember: you are a representative of DSA while at a swim meet.
2. Athletes and parents should wear DSA apparel to represent our team.
3. Leave the team area and the pool in a neat and clean condition at the conclusion of each session of the meet.
4. It is required that swimmers and parents stay off the deck and out of the competition area unless they are competing, serving in an official capacity, or volunteering.
5. All questions swimmers or parents may have concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the coaching staff. They will pursue the matter through the proper channels.
6. Please consult with the coaching staff prior to scratching an event or deck-entering an event. The coaching staff will always make the final decision on any scratches or deck-entries.
7. Swimmers who qualify for championship finals in prelim-finals meets are expected to compete in the finals. ALWAYS consult your coach if, for some reason, a swimmer needs to scratch from a final.
8. Swimmers are expected to offer encouragement and support to all members of the team. Positive comments and team spirit are beneficial to everybody. Negative thoughts and comments should be kept to yourself.



Meet Volunteering

Hosting meets is a big endeavor for our program, and provides us with consistent, local meets for our swimmers. We could not run meets without your dedicated assistance!

DSA families are REQUIRED to volunteer a certain amount of hours throughout the short course season, September to March, based on the age of your swimmer(s):

Families with ONLY Bronze swimmer(s): *10 Total Volunteer Hours*

Families with any Silver, Gold, Junior, Senior, or Senior Elite swimmer(s): *20 Total Volunteer Hours*

Volunteer hours can be accumulated at Home Meets OR when we are required to provide volunteers at Away Meets. Sign ups for both will be on the Job Sign Ups tab on the Events Page of our Captyn website. **VOLUNTEERS MUST SIGN UP ON CAPTYN TO BE TRACKED.** If you do not sign up on Captyn prior to the meet, the hours will NOT get logged.

Certified USA Officials' hours will be multiplied at a 1.5x rate and will be posted manually to Captyn by the Program Director.

The total applies to each family and can be accumulated by each parent and/or the swimmer themselves (I.E. an older swimmer can volunteer at a session for the younger swimmers).

DSA Administration will provide progress updates multiple times throughout the season to assist families keep track of their progress.

Additional opportunities to accumulate volunteer hours include the Holiday Gift Drive and the Food Bank Donation Drive. Specific requirements will be announced during each Drive.



Meet Volunteering

See below for a list of job duties that are needed at meets:

Awards: Label and sort awards. Distribute in bags sorted by team.

Check-In: Checks in volunteers, coaches, and officials. Verify volunteers have arrived for their job on time. Check coaches' and officials' credentials. Distribute wristbands to all meet workers.

Colorado Operator: Assist with Colorado Timing System on deck. Keeps track of heats and race completion.

Floater: General assistance on deck. Post heat sheets and results around the pool, provide timers relief for bathroom breaks, and assist Marshalls with deck/locker room supervision.

Head Timer: Backup timer for each race. Start two watches on each race and swap with timers when needed.

Hospitality: Maintain the hospitality room for coaches and officials, and periodically deliver water to volunteers and officials. Assist with setup, cleanup, and keeping food and drink stocked during the meet.

Official: A certified position through USA Swimming.

Runner: Collect time cards from each timer after each event and bring to the admin table.

Safety/Marshaling: Maintain safety on deck. Access control at points of entry on deck. Assist with SafeSport compliance by periodically checking locker rooms and enforcing no photography behind the blocks.

Timer: Time each race in an assigned lane. Two timers per lane.



Swimmers' Bill Of Rights

Swimmers have a right to:

1. Be treated with respect and to be free of verbal or physical abuse from a coach or another swimmer.
2. Expect that his or her coach, after being made aware of a limiting physical condition, will not ask the swimmer to perform or train in a manner that the coach knows will be harmful to the swimmer.
3. Expect that all practices, both in and out of the water, will be conducted in a safe manner so that the swimmer will not be exposed to unnecessary risk.
4. Know that his or her coach cares about them as a person as well as an athlete.
5. Be positively encouraged to do better, to be congratulated on a good performance, and to be criticized constructively when improvement is needed and attainable.
6. Expect practice to be challenging and that, overall, competition will be rewarding.
7. Set his or her own swimming goals with his or her coach, and to change these goals as circumstances arise.



Swimmers' Responsibilities

As an athlete's level of swimming ability increases, so does his or her responsibility. As swimmers improve, there is a growing level of commitment that requires great effort on all parts. A swimmer has responsibilities to the team, the coach, his or her parents, and most importantly to themselves. Swimmers need to prepare themselves for a 100% effort each time they come to practice.

Swimmers have the following responsibilities:

1. To treat his or her coach with respect at all times and to use proper channels to address any problems or complaints.
2. To adhere to the coach's rules governing training sessions and to focus on the training program.
3. To take his or her commitment to swimming seriously, no matter their training level.
4. To support Diamond State Aquatics, fellow swimmers, and his or her coach with encouragement and attendance at practice and meets.
5. To make the minimum number of training sessions set by the coach and strive for the recommended attendance percentage.
6. To train and race as hard as he or she can.

Swimmers will be required to bring specified training accessories (i.e. goggles, fins, etc.) to workouts. It is the swimmer's responsibility to make sure these items are properly adjusted and that spares are readily available. Equipment adjustment and repair will not be accepted as excuse to miss part of a training session.



Practice Policies

The following guidelines are to inform parents and swimmers of the coaches' policies regarding practice. These policies are designed to provide the best possible practice environment for all.

1. Each training group has specific attendance suggestions or requirements appropriate for the objectives of that group. As a general rule, the least possible interruption in the training schedule will produce the greatest amount of success. The expectation level of the coaches' (that each swimmer attends practices) increases as swimmers move to higher groups.
2. For the safety and protection of the swimmers they should arrive at the pool no more than 10 minutes before the start of practice and be picked up immediately after practice. It is imperative that the swimmers arrive on time so that the coaching staff can efficiently use the allotted time; however it is also extremely important that children not be left unsupervised at the pool prior to or after practice.
3. Each swimmer should plan to stay the entire practice as each practice is designed to be most beneficial when completed in its entirety. In the event that your child needs to be dismissed early from practice, please notify the coach prior to the beginning of practice.
4. All practice groups are expected to be at their designated starting place with their practice equipment ready to start practice on time.
5. Swimmers must notify their coach if they leave the pool and/or pool deck at any time during the practice.
6. Occasionally, some or most of a practice group may be at a meet, in which case your swimmer will be notified of a practice change or cancellation. Such notice will be provided through email.
7. Swimmers and parents are discouraged from disrupting the coach or other swimmers with unnecessary communication. Emergencies, of course, are an exception.



Practice Code of Conduct

1. Swimmers are expected to support their teammates at practice as well as in competition. Working together as a team benefits all individuals in the group and is an important part of DSA. Swimmers are encouraged always to be positive at practice.
2. Swimmers are expected to follow the instructions of the coaching staff at all times.
3. Abusive language, lying, stealing, and/or vandalism will not be tolerated. These behaviors are directly contrary to the objective of DSA and may warrant strict disciplinary actions, up to and including expulsion from the team.
4. Swimmers may leave practice early only with the coaches' permission and prior notification from a parent.
5. At the DuPont Country Club facility, swimmers are not permitted in the strength training or other fitness center areas unless a member of the coaching staff is present.
6. At all rental facilities, swimmers are only permitted to use the pool and locker rooms areas.
7. During workouts, the pool deck is for coaches and swimmers only. If you need to speak with the coaches, please call or email them at least two hours before practice.



Required Equipment

Bronze Group: Kickboard, Long Fins

Silver Group: Kickboard, Long Fins, Paddles, Pull Buoy

Gold I & II Groups: Kickboard, Long Fins, Paddles, Pull Buoy, Snorkel

Junior I & II Groups: Kickboard, Long Fins, Paddles, Pull Buoy, Snorkel

Senior Group: Kickboard, Long Fins, Paddles, Pull Buoy, Snorkel

Senior Elite Group: Kickboard, Long Fins, Paddles, Pull Buoy, Snorkel, Thera-Band (Given)

It is suggested that swimmers in all groups carry their gear in a mesh equipment bag.



Coaches' Bill Of Rights

Coaches have a right to:

1. Be treated with respect by all swimmers, parents, and other coaches.
2. Expect the full support of all parents in the DSA program.
3. Establish training programs which are safe and which will meet the needs and goals of the swimmers, head coach, and DSA.
4. Be free from unnecessary interruption from parents during training sessions or meets.
5. Be compensated fairly for his or her services considering the financial abilities of DSA.
6. Respond to parental communications in a timely, yet realistic, manner.



Coaches' Responsibilities

The coaches' job is to supervise the entire competitive swim program. The Diamond State Aquatics coaching staff is dedicated to providing a program for young athletes that will enable them to learn the value of striving to improve oneself. Therefore, the coaches must have final say in matters affecting training and competition.

1. The coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in appropriate practice groups. This is based on the age and ability level of each individual.
2. Sole responsibility for stroke instruction and the training regimen rests with the DSA coaching staff. Each group's practices are based on sound scientific principles and are geared to the specific goals of that group.
3. The coaching staff will make the final decision concerning which meets DSA swimmers may attend. The coaching staff also makes the final decision concerning which events a swimmer is entered into.
4. At meets, the coaching staff will conduct and supervise warm-ups for the team. After each race, the coaches will offer constructive criticism regarding the swimmer's performance.
5. The building of a relay team is the sole responsibility of the coaching staff.
6. Each coach has a responsibility to constantly be aware of the swimmers' safety and wellbeing.
7. Each coach has a responsibility to be a positive role model for the swimmers.
8. Each coach has a responsibility to be a technical expert on the sport of swimming.
9. Each coach has a responsibility to help construct a vision for the athlete of what is possible in the sport of swimming and the path each swimmer will need to follow to achieve that goal.



Guide to Being A Good Swim Parent

A successful swimming program requires understanding and cooperation among the coaches, swimmers, and parents. This relationship can be critical to your child's successful development on the team.

Your perspective and the coaches' perspective may differ when it comes to your child's development. Patience, understanding, and most importantly, **communication** are the cornerstones of this relationship.

1. Remind your child that you love and support them, no matter how they perform either at practice or at a meet. Remember that all swimmers progress at their own rate, and be patient!
2. Support the coaching staff, *even if you disagree with him or her*. Respectfully communicate any conflicts with the coach directly, rather than through your swimmer.
3. Be punctual for practice and meets and plan for your child to spend the entire practice at the pool.
4. Be enthusiastic about taking your child to practice, meets, volunteering, team events, meetings, etc.
5. Support the team at practice, at meets, and at home.
6. Encourage healthy eating and sleeping.
7. Do not coach from the sidelines, stands, or at home.
8. Do not criticize officials.
9. Be mindful that swimmers should not train or compete for the approval of their parents.
10. Remember that winning is not just about the place, but is also about achieving personal goals.



Observing Practices

We respectfully request that you do not interfere with the practice and remain a bystander without making any verbal or non-verbal contact with your swimmer during the practice.

1. Parents are not allowed on the immediate pool deck area to observe practice. If you are on the deck directly next to the pool, you will be asked to leave. Parents are ONLY allowed on the immediate pool deck in the following instances:
 1. An emergency situation. We will come to get you if this occurs.
 2. Parents of Bronze swimmers are permitted to “drop off” and “pick up” their swimmer from the pool deck before and after practice. Once the swimmer is on the pool deck with his/her coach, please leave the immediate deck area.
2. Parents who choose to watch practice must do so from the designated viewing areas, which include:
 1. At DuPont Country Club: Behind the first row of chairs adjacent to the pool, away from the end of the pool where coaches are speaking with swimmers. Ideally, as far back from the pool as possible.
 2. At Concord High School: On the bleachers, away from the end of the pool where coaches are speaking with swimmers.
 3. At University of Delaware Outdoor Pool: Behind the first row of chairs adjacent to the pool, away from the end of the pool where coaches are speaking with swimmers. Ideally, as far back from the pool as possible.
 4. At St. Andrew’s School: On the bleachers, away from the end of the pool where coaches are speaking with swimmers.
3. No video taping of any sort by parents during practices is allowed.
4. Parents observing practices should respect this privilege. Any conduct deemed detrimental to any aspect of the DSA program by the coaching staff will cause the parent to lose the privilege of observing practices.



Communication

Team Website – www.diamondstateaquatics.com DSA's website is kept up to date daily and maintained by the team's administrator and coaches. All information can ultimately be found on the website and any new or important updates will be on the home page.

Coach/Staff Email – Emailing is the preferred method of communication unless the issue is an emergency or extremely sensitive, requiring a direct phone call. The coaches' emails can be found on the team website. It is a coach's personal prerogative to give out their cell phone number. In the event you utilize this form of communication, please be considerate of both their personal time and life outside of the pool.

Discussions with the coaching staff ARE NOT to be held during practice or meets. Please set up a time to meet with the coach when it is convenient for them.

Communication Chain of Command: Group Lead Coach -> DSA Program Director -> DCC Aquatics Director

Announcements – It is most common for the Senior level groups to be made aware of updates through direct announcements by their Lead and/or Assistant Coach. The expectations for our Senior swimmers is to pay attention, retain, and communicate to their parents any and all team information.

Text Alerts – Immediate or emergency announcements may be sent out via text messages through Captyn. Parents and swimmers should ensure their mobile number is added to their Captyn account in order to receive text alerts.

For weather or emergency practice cancelations, email and text notifications will be sent out as soon as possible



Appendix A - Terms and Conditions for Participation

1. The DSA Registration Fee is not refundable and must be paid prior to new swimmers joining the team.
2. Monthly Program dues are to be paid by the first day of each month. If a swimmer begins after the first day of the month, the rate will be prorated on a weekly basis.
3. Accounts carrying a balance past the 10th of each month will be charged a \$10 late fee. If the balance remains unpaid by the 10th of the following month, the swimmer will not be allowed to swim until the balance of the account is paid in full.
4. Any payments returned for insufficient funds or credit cards denied will be charged a \$10 fee to that member's account.
5. In the event a swimmer is "moved up" into a new group, they are then responsible for that group's monthly program fees.
6. Meet entry fees, gear and apparel charges, meet coaching fees, and team travel are in addition to the monthly dues. Nonpayment of any of these fees will also necessitate non-participation for the swimmer(s) until payment is made.
7. Should a swimmer decide to discontinue participation in the program with DSA, the monthly dues for the month of which he/she swims any portion thereof, and any outstanding fees, are considered an obligation to DSA, and are payable upon termination of participation.
8. Each parent, guardian, and swimmer is responsible for reading and understanding the contents of the Diamond State Aquatics Handbook.
9. Each parent, guardian, and swimmer will be required to read and abide by the "Parent Code of Conduct," "Swimmer Code of Conduct," and "Team Travel Commitment Policy." Failure to comply with the appendices of the team handbook may result in suspension or expulsion from Diamond State Aquatics.

I understand and agree to the above terms and conditions of Diamond State Aquatics in exchange for the privilege of my child(ren) to participate in the activities and swim program.

Checking the box of this Handbook through the registration process of the 2026-2027 season will stand as agreement to the above conditions.



Appendix B - Parent Code of Conduct

1. Practice teamwork with all parents, swimmers and coaches.
2. Do not coach or instruct the team or any swimmer at a practice or meet (from the stands or any other area) or interfere with coaches on pool deck.
3. Demonstrate good sportsmanship by conducting oneself in a matter that earns the respect of your child, other swimmers, parents, officials and the coaches at meets and practices.
4. Maintain self-control at all times. Know your role.
 1. Swimmers - Swim
 2. Coaches - Coach
 3. Officials - Officiate
 4. Parents - Parent
5. Criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, and/or any participating swimmer will not be permitted or tolerated.
6. Enjoy involvement with Diamond State Aquatics by supporting the swimmers, coaches and other parents with positive communication and actions.
7. During competitions, questions or concerns regarding decisions made by a meet official are directed to a member of our coaching staff. Parents may address USA Swimming Officials via the coaching staff ONLY.
8. All adult volunteers, officials, and anyone participating on deck with the team must complete the USA Safe Sport Athlete Protection Training in order to participate. All adults must adhere to the USA Safe Sport Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy.

To achieve our goals, we must work together as a team. Those who cannot follow the rules stated above will not be welcome as part of our program. Failure to comply with these codes of conduct, the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, or the Diamond State Aquatics Anti Bullying Policy may result in suspension or dismissal from Diamond State Aquatics.

Checking the box of this Handbook through the registration process of the 2026-2027 season will stand as agreement to the above conditions.



Appendix C - Swimmer Code of Conduct

1. The Diamond State Aquatics rules are to be followed at all times, in all facilities.
2. Disrespectful, indiscreet or destructive behavior will not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of each swimmer to make every effort to avoid guilt by association with such activities at any time.
3. Use of proper language is expected at all times. Profane, abusive, and disrespectful language is not permitted.
4. All athletes are expected to treat team members, coaches, staff, and competitors with respect, support, and kindness.
5. Any person guilty of thievery, on and off of a DSA facility, will be subject to expulsion from the team.
6. The consumption or purchase of alcohol, smoking or chewing tobacco, vaping, or use of any other illegal drug or substance of any kind is prohibited. Any team member found or suspected to be in the presence of others (regardless of team affiliation) partaking in any of the above activities will be subject to expulsion from Diamond State Aquatics.
7. Each swimmer is responsible for replacing accidentally lost or damaged equipment.
8. Each swimmer must have the required team gear: apparel, caps, suits, and equipment as determined by the DSA coaches at the beginning of each season.
9. All athletes are expected to abide by the dress code determined by the coaching staff of Diamond State Aquatics at all practices, competitions, and during team travel.
10. Be on time and prepared for each practice, competition, and team event.
11. Always represent the team positively in your behavior, appearance, and sportsmanship.
12. All swimmers 18 or over are required to take the USA Swimming Athlete Protection Training in order to participate.

To achieve our goals, we must work together as a team. Those who cannot follow the rules stated above will not be welcome as part of our program. Failure to comply with these codes of conduct, the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, or the Diamond State Aquatics Anti Bullying Policy may result in suspension or dismissal from Diamond State Aquatics.

Checking the box of this Handbook through the registration process of the 2026-2027 season will stand as agreement to the above conditions.



Appendix D - Team Travel Commitment Policy

Diamond State Aquatics may participate in competitions for which the team provides a **Team Travel** service. Athletes who elect to **Team Travel** to any of these competitions will be under the direct supervision of the DSA coaching staff and any designated chaperones from the time the team departs for the competition until the time the team returns from the competition.

This **Team Travel** service will come at a cost to those who elect to participate. This cost will always cover travel (flight, bus, and/or rental car) and hotel accommodations. It may also cover food expenses and any related meet fees. When coordinating **Team Travel**, the DSA coaching staff will:

- Arrange *all* travel and hotel accommodations
- Provide a **Team Travel Commitment Form**
- Provide a commitment date by which all athletes who wish to **Team Travel** must turn in the **Team Travel Commitment Form** to the coaching staff
- Provide the estimated cost of **Team Travel** in advance of the competition
- Provide a final cost once all expenses have been finalized

Diamond State Aquatics members who elect to **Team Travel** will be required to pay all **Team Travel** expenses by the date provided on the **Team Travel Commitment Form**. Diamond State Aquatics members will have the benefit of having all **Team Travel** costs charged to the credit card associated with their DSA account.

Diamond State Aquatics members who qualify for meets after the **Team Travel Commitment Form** due date will be given the option to **Team Travel** understanding that they may incur additional costs because of higher travel expenses.

Any Diamond State Aquatics members who wish to utilize the **Team Travel** service but cannot pay the full expense by the designated date must make written arrangements with DSA office before turning in the **Team Travel Commitment Form**.

Some competitions qualify for Athlete Support funding from Middle Atlantic. Only athletes who have been members of Middle Atlantic for more than one year may qualify for Athlete Support. The club will retain a percentage of each reimbursement to cover part of the coaches' travel costs.

