

Pine Island Aquatics

Handbook for 2023-2024 Season

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# MISSION

The missions of our program is to instill a lifelong love of swimming through enjoyment and accomplishments at all levels. We are committed to provide excellent and professional coaching to develop swimmers to the best of their abilities. We provide an atmosphere that inspires swimmers to achieve their maximum potential through a strong work ethic, discipline, self-motivation, and self-esteem.

# ABOUT US

Pine Island Aquatics is the only competitive swim team in the Greater Pine Island area. Our team is a proud member of USA Swimming. Training takes place at the Pine Island Community Pool. Our program has five different levels of competitive training programs. Swimmers range from age four through senior year of high school and attend year-round competitions. Our USA Swimming certified coaches commit their time, energy, and resources to teach swimmers the rules of the sport, stroke mechanics, and a competitive philosophy involving personal accountability and sportsmanship together with proper training and nutritional habits. Currently our Head Coach and Assistant Coaches are volunteers, and our board of directors have strived to make this sport affordable to all families.

# PINE ISLAND AQUATICS PROGRAM

Our USA Swimming certified coaches commit their time, energy, and resources to teach swimmers the rules of the sport, stroke mechanics, and a competitive philosophy involving personal accountability and sportsmanship together with proper training and nutritional habits.

### TEAM OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a teaching framework for every competitive stroke, starts, and turns with a coaching staff that encourages fundamentals and allows each swimmer to achieve his/her potential.
2. To develop a PIA parents’ program that enhances and supports the team.
3. To develop a team identity and build pride in the team.
4. To promote awareness of and access to this swim program.
5. To provide training and competition for swimmers at all levels, allowing everyone to develop to his/her full potential.

### SWIMMER OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a positive self-image, self-respect, and self-confidence.
2. To develop self-reliance and self-discipline.
3. To develop self-motivation, goal setting, and achievement through practice and swim meets.
4. To participate in a wholesome, worthwhile physical and recreational activity.
5. To learn sportsmanship, cooperation, and support of team members.

# FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES (PAYMENT OF TEAM FEES)

**Pine island Aquatics Inc.** is a non-profit corporation that operates on a fixed budget. Operating expenses for the team include team fees, Coaches’ expenses, meet expenses, equipment costs, team communication, team activity expenses, etc. Revenue is generated by fees and through fundraising activities. As a swimming family, we all play a part in assuring that **PIA** continues to enjoy a solid financial footing. This is accomplished through several sources.

**Fee Payment Terms:** Monthly Billing through Team Unify Payments.

**Statements**: Billing is generated on the 1st of each month and is sent via email prior. All amounts billed are due when the bill is received. Overdue balances and/or past season balances are due prior to, or as part of registration for the current swim season. Swimmers will not be allowed to participate in any practices and/or meets until family accounts are current. Treasurer will report delinquencies to the swimmer’s parents to notify them that their child cannot participate until the account is up to date. Coaches will be responsible for prohibiting the swimmer from being on deck until notified that fees are considered current.

**Other Fees/Charges:** There may be other fees and charges, which are incurred throughout a swim season. These could include: meet entry fees, caps, shirts, etc.

# CLUB FEES

All club swimmers are to have a USA Swimming membership. The annual registration fee is $85 which is paid to USA Swimming. This will allow your swimmer to swim in sanctioned meets as they are posted on our website. We also charge a $25 annual fee which provides the swimmer with a team swim cap and helps cover administrative costs and team registration fees.

### YEAR-ROUND SWIMMING

**GROUP 1 – NOVICE (AGE 4YR-12YR) - $75/MO.**

This group is for new swimmers that are learning the basics of competitive swimming. This group will focus on learning the very basics of freestyle and backstroke. Swimmers must be able to swim one length of a 25-yard pool. The emphasis of this group is to become comfortable in the water to gain a lifelong love of the sport worth having fun.

**GROUP 2 – SILVER (AGE 6YR-12YR) - $75/MO.**

This group continues to build on what swimmers learned in the novice group. This group focuses on basic competition skills while learning basic technique for all 4 strokes, diving off the side of the pool, and transitioning to diving off the block. Swimmers are encouraged to try competing at this level. Having fun and gaining a love of the sport are a major focus.

**GROUP 3 – GOLD (AGE 8YR-18YR) - $100/MO.**

This group is for age group swimmers that compete on a statewide level. This group works on all 4 competitive swimming strokes, flip turns, diving, meet preparation and endurance while increasing yardage to prepare swimmers for moving up into the advanced and more competitive swimming group. Advancement to this group is by coach recommendation only.

**GROUP 4 – PLATINUM (AGE 10YR-18YR) - $125/MO.**

This group is for age group swimmers that compete on a statewide level. The group continues to work on stroke technique and all skills required for competitive swimming including pace clock management and race strategies with an increase of Aerobic training and dryland exercises. Advancement to this group is by coach recommendation only.

**GROUP 5 – ELITE (AGE 12YR-18YR) - $125/MO.**

This group is for high school, college, and age group swimmers that compete in local, LSC, Sectional, Futures, and National meets. The emphasis on this group is distance swimming, training, and racing. Technique and skills are perfected and yardage in competition becomes the focus. Practice is intense cardiovascular training with daily goals of completing posted yardage and maintaining proper technique throughout practice. Dryland training, race strategies and advanced training philosophies are expanded. Swimmers should plan to attend all workouts with positive attitude. Top level meet participation is required. Advancement to this group is by recommendation only.

# TEAM EQUIPMENT

Certain equipment is necessary for swimmers to acquire that they will use regularly for training/practice. Items can be purchased from our team store at https://www.swimoutlet.com/collections/piagear. Some of the equipment will wear out or become too small and must be replaced over time and not all items are needed for each level. As the swimmer progresses additional equipment will be needed. The items in our team store list what is needed for each swim group.

# PRACTICES

Your swimmer's enrollment in PIA means that you and your swimmer have made a commitment to attend the number of practices scheduled for that program each week. Attendance at those practices is expected. Space in the pool is made available for your swimmer for those times. In addition, the coaches have planned a progressive training schedule based on this commitment. We fully realize that, from time to time, the demands of school, illness, or other commitments may prevent a swimmer from meeting a practice commitment. Please let the coach know ahead of time when your child will be absent from two or more consecutive practices. We regret that we are unable to provide make-up practices or refund for missed practices. Below are the outlined practice times for each group:

* Novice – Practice Monday through Thursday 4:30 PM – 5:15 PM
* Silver – Practice Monday through Thursday 5:30 PM-6:15 PM
* Gold – Practice Monday through Friday 6:00 PM-7:00 PM
* Platinum – Practice Monday through Friday 4:30 PM-6:30 PM & Saturday 6:45 AM-8:45AM
* Elite – Practice Monday through Friday 4:30 PM-6:30 PM & Saturday 6:45 AM-8:45 AM

# PRACTICE GUIDELINES

1. Check the club website and your email daily. Since we have so many swimmers our coaches will utilize email, text alerts, and the PIA website as our primary means of communication. Board members are sometimes around during practice if you have any questions, as well.
2. Demonstrate respect for all coaches and swimmers on deck and in the water, and for parents who choose to stay during practice.
3. Never interrupt the coaches while they are actively working during scheduled practices. They are available before and after practice, or by appointment.
4. No parents or siblings are allowed on deck or in the pool during practice for insurance reasons. We ask that spectators who choose to stay during practices use the tables/picnic tables in the gravel/grass, closest to the diving board. This allows our Coaches to have all swimmers undivided attention during practice.
5. Practice Drop off and Pick Up - Try to arrive at practice early enough so that your swimmer can be properly attired, on the deck, and ready to begin the practice session on time. For the safety and security of your child, it is imperative that each swimmer be picked up promptly after practice. Coaches have other commitments and cannot remain more than 15 minutes after practice. Please be aware that if you are more than 15 mins late to picking up your swimmer, we will start charging $5 for every 15 mins you are late.
6. Demonstrate a positive attitude that is reflected in your behavior and communication with your swimmer, the coaching staff, and parents of other swimmers.

# COMMUNICATION

Our website is updated frequently and serves to be our team’s main source of communication to parents and swimmers. The address is <https://www.pineislandaquatics.com>.

The PIA website is the place to check for all up-to-date information on meets, practices, fundraisers, etc. Please make sure your PIA account has your correct email address and cell phone numbers in our system.

The OnDeck app can be downloaded from the app store and is directly tied to our website. OnDeck is a great way to manage your account, sign up for meets, and view your swimmers best times.

Most of our team’s communication with families is via the ‘band’ app that can be found in the app store. Use this link to join the team’s band: https://band.us/n/aea594V4dd08u

# PINE ISLAND AQUATICS PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

As our organization grows and we continue to expand our programs, we will seek to establish and/or clarify our policies. Our policies help to guide the organization and ensure continued success. One of the first areas to be addressed is parent behavior - specifically, what type of behavior is expected of swimming parents. PIA Swim Club is fortunate to have highly experienced, professional volunteer coaches working to develop our children into better swimmers and more importantly, disciplined people. As parents, it’s essential that we give our coaching staff the respect and authority they deserve to run our swim team. PIA as an organization, highly encourages the following parental behavior:

1. Practice teamwork with all parents, swimmers, and coaches by supporting the values of Discipline, Loyalty, Commitment and Hard Work.
2. As a parent, I will not coach or instruct the team or any swimmer at a practice or meets (from the stands or any other area) or interfere with coaches on the pool deck.
3. Demonstrate good sportsmanship by conducting myself in a manner that earns the respect of my child, other swimmers, parents, officials, and the coaches at meets and practices.
4. Maintain self-control at all times. Know my role. Swimmers – Swim, Coaches – Coach, Officials – Officiate, Parents – Parent.
5. As a parent, I understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward the coaches, officials, and/or any participating swimmer will not be permitted or tolerated.
6. Enjoy your involvement with PIA by supporting the swimmers, coaches, and other parents with positive communication and actions.
7. During competitions - Questions or concerns regarding decisions made by meet officials are directed to a member of our coaching staff or a board member if present. Parents address officials via the coaching staff only.
8. **Pine Island Aquatics Inc.** is a nonprofit corporation run **entirely** by volunteers, except for our Head Coach. It requires many hours to keep the team running, and all parents are required to contribute a designated amount of time to the team. Our team cannot operate without volunteers. There are many opportunities to help and volunteer jobs will be posted monthly on our website.

# VOLUNTEER HOURS

Swimming is an athletic adventure for both swimmers and parents. While some sports only require the parent to watch supportively from the sidelines or bleachers, competitive swimming requires enormous volunteer efforts to be successful. For our swim club to thrive, **ALL** families are required to volunteer at swim meets and team functions. Our volunteer coordinator will post jobs on our website. Examples of volunteer opportunities may include things such as: transporting tents to and from meets, helping with fundraisers, cooler of waters for practices etc.

# SWIM MEETS

The purpose of competitive swimming is to compete, and that means attending swim meets! Registered swimmers of PIA should understand that we are a competitive team, not a recreational team. Swimmers should be willing to accept the responsibility of membership and participate in meets. For many new swimmers, taking the first step and going to their first competitive meet is a big undertaking. Our coaches understand this and are happy to share information about each meet and what meets may be good for beginners.

### SWIM MEET PROCEDURES

As a competitive swim team, we encourage all our swimmers to attend swim meets and compete in events recommended by their coaches. Swim meets provide an opportunity for the swimmers to measure the progress of their training and practice. They are also a social time, which enables the swimmers to build friendships with fellow teammates. PIA families will receive meet information via email and team website. Each PIA team member who is eligible to attend a specific meet must log into their Team Unify account to commit to the swim meet they are eligible to attend, and must be completed by the listed deadline.

### SIGNING UP FOR A SWIM MEET

1. Sign-in to your Team Unify account.
2. Click on the Events and competition tab and find the assigned meet for your child.
3. Click on the Attend this event button for the meet
4. Click on desired athlete you want to commit to the event
5. This will bring you to the Athlete sign up page
6. From here you can commit the Athlete by using the Signup Record and selecting “yes please (swimmer’s name) will attend this event.”
7. Remember to Save Changes!

Not all swimmers attend the same meets throughout the season, so please check the schedule carefully to determine if a swim meet is appropriate for your swimmer’s level before you commit. Please pay attention to the meet entry deadline and commit your swimmer through your Team Unify account as early as possible. Each family will receive an e-mail from PIA approximately 2-3 weeks before each swim meet. The e-mail will contain a link to the PIA website. Login to Team Unify and select Events & Competitions, then Team Events.

The day before the meet, make sure your swimmer eats well and gets a good night’s sleep.  Be sure to pack everything that both you and your swimmer will need for the day.  Swimmers will sit with our team, so look for our tent, with our PIA Banner. Coaches will have a general idea of tent location once set up and will communicate this to parents. Ask other parents to find out where parents will be sitting.

**NOTE:** If your child is sitting with their team on the pool deck, be advised that you will not be able to walk over to them during the meet (parents are not allowed on the pool deck) and possibly may not communicate with them until the meet is over.  This means that you need to be sure his or her swim bag is packed with everything they will need for the day.

### SWIMMER EVENTS

Swimmers and parents/guardians can choose events during the sign-up process, but your swimmers group coach will make the final decision. Newer swimmers should initially be placed in events in which they will succeed. As their skills build, they should be placed in more challenging events. Please ask for recommendations from your swimmers coach if not sure which events to enter**.**

### MEET FEES

Meet fees are required for entry in a swim meet and are the responsibility of the parent/guardian. The Board Treasurer/Co-Treasurer will invoice the swimmer’s account and charge Meet Entry fees (event fees and swimmer surcharge) to your credit card on file when the entries are submitted to the meet host, prior to the meet closing deadline. Once the PIA meet sign up deadline has passed, PIA Head Coach will submit all entries and meet fees to the host team. Meet fees are non-refundable to PIA once they have been submitted to the meet host. If a swimmer is unable to attend the meet (for any reason) after the submission of the entries and team payment, the swimmer will still be responsible for payment of the meet fees to PIA. If PIA coaches or staff make an error in a swimmer’s entries, the team will be responsible for the subsequent fees.

### WHAT TO BRING TO A MEET

1. Swimsuit - usually worn to meet (Ideally 2, in case of mishaps)
2. Equipment Bag with - Goggles, swim cap, and towel (Ideally 2 each, in case of mishaps)
3. Shoes IE: Flip Flops, Crocs, Water shoes
4. Chair
5. Sunblock
6. Nutritious snacks for your swimmer (fresh or dried fruits/vegetables, yogurt, Jell-O, bagels, muffins, graham crackers, granola bars, pretzels, trail mix, low fat lunch meat/cheese sandwiches.
7. Water bottle/drink for your swimmer (minimum sugar preferably)
8. Parka/warm clothes/Blanket (during cooler weather)
9. Change of dry clothes for the ride home
10. Heat Sheet, highlighter, sharpie, and pen to keep up with your swimmer’s events.
11. Cash for away meets (spectator fees, concessions, or meet shirts and swim gear are sometimes for sale)
12. Relatives and friends to cheer everyone on!

### THE MEET

 **1.** It is important for any swimmer to know which event/heat/lane numbers he/she is swimming. (They should have the numbers written on their hand or arm. Parents should do this for their young/new swimmers). He/she may swim right away after warm-ups or he/she may have to wait awhile. The lane and heat assignments are posted shortly before the meet starts. The swimmer should check his/her assignments for each event he/she is scheduled to swim.

 **2**. Swimmers should have their caps and goggles on before their heat is ready. The swimmer swims his/her race when it is time.

 **3. After each swim**: Swimmer should go immediately to their coach. (The coach will discuss the swim with each swimmer.) Generally, the coach follows these guidelines when discussing swims: Positive comments or praise. Suggestions for improvement.

**Things you, as a parent, can do after each swim**: Tell him/her how great they did! The coaching staff will be sure to discuss stroke technique with him/her if needed. You just need to tell them how proud you are and what a great job he/she did... The swimmer will now wait until their next event is called and starts the process again.

 **4.** When a swimmer has completed all his/her events, they and their parents can go home. Make sure however, you or your swimmer check with the coach before leaving to make sure your swimmer is not included in a relay event (usually always the last events of a meet). It is not fair to other swimmers who may have stayed to swim in a relay with your swimmer as part of the relay team, and they are not there.

Please do not hesitate to ask another parent for help or information if you are uncertain about a particular procedure or facet of the swim meet. Meets are a lot of fun for the swimmers! They get to visit with friends and get to know swimmers from other teams. They also get to "race" and see how much they have improved after all the hard work put in at practice.

### MEET RESULTS

Results of the meet are typically posted near the officials at a meet, but a much more efficient way to view results is to use the MeetMobile app that can be found in the app store. The app requires a minor subscription fee to get up to the minute results but most parents find it money well spent as it is also handy for keeping track of what events your swimmer is in for that meet and includes the heat and lane number.

# SHORT & LONG COURSE SEASON

USA Swimming recognizes two seasons within each calendar year. The season beginning in September and ending March is referred to as the short course season. During the short course season, meets are recognized as “yard” events. There is also a long course swim season that begins in April and ends in early August. Meets during long course season are recognized as “meter” events.

# REGISTRATION

**Pine Island Aquatics** USA Swimming annual registration will begin each September.

# OUTREACH PROGRAM

Swimmers who would like to join the PIA Swim Team but might need financial assistance for the annual USA registration fee and/or the monthly coaching dues, may be eligible for discounts based on financial need. If your swimmer qualifies, they are eligible for a $5.00 per year USA Swimming Registration fee. Additionally, your monthly dues with the PIA Swim Team can be covered through a scholarship from one of our generous donors if a scholarship is available. Team Registration for the year will be reduced to $5 per swimmer as well. To find out if you are eligible for these reduced fees please see the qualification guidelines outlined on our LSC’s outreach page located [HERE](https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/szfllsc/page/diversity--outreach). Simply provide a copy of the requested documents to PIA by emailing president@pineislandaquatics.com.

In addition to these benefits, you will also receive reimbursement of up to $150 of individual meet entry fees throughout the year. The details of the program are outlined on our LSC’s outreach page located [HERE](https://www.gomotionapp.com/team/szfllsc/page/diversity--outreach). We hope that this will encourage you to participate in as many sanctioned meets as you are eligible.