



VASHON SEALS SWIM TEAM
PO BOX 1824, VASHON WA 98070
WWW.SWIMVASHON.ORG
SPLASH@SWIMVASHON.ORG

POLICY HANDBOOK

Amended August 15, 2011

TRYOUTS

Placement tryouts occur each quarter ahead of registration and are designed to ensure a swimmer is placed in the correct workout group. Swimmers wishing to tryout for the team may do so either on selected tryout dates or by appointment with the head coach. Tryouts apply to new swimmers, or swimmers returning after missing two sessions. The tryout period insurance covers one practice only, after that, swimmers need to register before they can get back in the water.

ALUMNI SWIMMERS/GUEST SWIMMERS

As part of our commitment to team unity, the VSST welcomes alumni swimmers, and invites them to swim with the team if there is room in the pool. However, **ALL swimmers must be insured before they swim**. Before an alumnus can get into the water, s/he needs to register with USA Swimming. In addition, s/he must purchase a VSST swim pass that will cover him or her for 10 practices.

In addition, the VSST welcomes guest swimmers and invites them to swim with the team if there is room in the pool. As with alumni swimmers, guest swimmers need to be registered with USA Swimming and must purchase a VSST swim pass that will cover them for 10 practices.

SWIMMERS NEW TO THE PROGRAM—PRO-RATED FEES

In general, swimmers should register and enter the program at the start of a swim session. However, if there is room in the pool, a swimmer new to the program may start after the start of a swim season, subject to the approval of the head coach. Fees will be pro-rated, starting from the start of swimming with the program.

REFUND

Refunds will be issued only if requested no fewer than 7 business days prior to a session start date, and all refunds will be assessed the USA Swimming membership fee plus a \$25 Vashon Park District administration fee. There will be no refunds once a swimmer begins a session, except in the event of a documented medical reason or a significant family emergency.

ATTENDANCE

As part of their commitment to the team, and to maintain the integrity of the program, all swimmers are expected to maintain a minimum 85% attendance record to ensure their place on the team. The coach needs to be notified of any absences. Swimmers who fail to meet this expectation should discuss their options with the head coach.



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PROLONGED ABSENCE

The VSST recognizes that swimmers may need to take time away from swimming, and tries to accommodate prolonged absences while still maintaining the integrity of the program. There are four options available for swimmers to consider:

1. **Summer Session Absences:** Fees will only be pro-rated for swimmers starting halfway through the session. This option is only available if there is room in the pool and subject to the approval of the head coach. Swimmers who take vacation during the Summer Session can attend additional practices to make up the time missed if there is room in the pool.
2. **Sabbatical Policy:** This policy applies to swimmers who have been registered with the team for one full year. It is intended for swimmers who want to take a specific amount of time away from swimming but who intend to return and who want to reserve their place in the program. Applications must be made in writing before the planned absence, and will be evaluated by the board on a case-by-case basis. Absence shall not be for longer than eight weeks, though extensions may be considered. Fees will be pro-rated for the amount of time away from the program.
3. **Medical Leave:** Should a medical issue prevent a swimmer from participating in the program, the VSST requires documentation from the attending physician, and will work with the swimmer in dealing with any rehabilitation. This policy is intended for swimmers who are injured but who intend to return and who want to reserve their place in the program. Fees will be pro-rated for the amount of time away from the program.
4. **Withdrawal:** In the unlikely event that a swimmer needs to withdraw from the program after being enrolled and paying the fees, a swimmer may submit her/his written resignation, giving 30 days notice that s/he will be leaving the team. Fees will be pro-rated starting from the end of the 30 day notice period.

VOLUNTEER COMMITMENT

Vashon Seals Swim Team succeeds because of the commitment and help of its parent volunteers. It is the team's policy to require a minimum participation of 6 hours per quarter, and the volunteer coordinator will contact each family to fully explain the available opportunities. **Families receiving reduced fees should volunteer a minimum of 12 hours per session.**

PRIVACY

VSST respects and protects the privacy of its members and does not share, rent, or sell personal information to third parties. Our email lists and team rosters are to be used for VSST business purposes only, and may not be used for any other purpose without explicit written permission.

PERMISSION TO PHOTOGRAPH

Vashon Seals Swim Team often takes pictures of swimmers to use in articles, publicity materials and team promotion. In joining the team you agree to allow the team to use photos of your swimmer for this purpose. If you do not wish images of your swimmer to be used, please notify the team in writing.



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CODE OF CONDUCT

The Vashon Seals Swim Team (VSST) Code of Conduct guidelines are founded on the principles of mutual respect and cooperation:

1. Safety is our primary concern. During emergencies, swimmers and parents are expected to be quiet and listen for directions from coaching staff.
2. We will “praise in public and correct in private”. We will refrain from judging or criticizing others and will not discuss individuals when they are not in our presence.
3. We will treat all members of the team (coaches, swimmers, parents) and our opponents with dignity and respect.
4. We will not use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco (see Drug and Alcohol Policy).
5. Physically or verbally abusive behavior, including sexually inappropriate behavior, is unacceptable for members of VSST.
6. We will be dedicated and loyal to our team and teammates. We will be vocally supportive. We will display our team pride by competing in VSST caps and suits at all times.
7. We will remain silent and make an honest effort to listen and look when anyone is speaking.
8. When unable to attend practice or meets, we will inform our coach ahead of time.
9. We will arrive to practice and meets allowing enough time to begin on time, with the correct gear.
10. We will be committed to our best effort every day. An honest effort does not include cutting laps, pulling on the lane line, missing send offs/sets, or any similar behavior.
11. We will participate in a minimum of 85% of scheduled meets and practices.
12. We are all responsible for the care and proper use of equipment. Practice is not finished until all supplies are returned to storage. Everyone helps.

SWIM MEET POLICY

1. No swimmer shall attend a meet unless accompanied by a parent or a chaperone arranged for by the swimmer’s parents.
2. No swimmer shall drive a car to, from, or at an away swim meet unless accompanied by a parent or chaperone. Swimmers 16 years of age and older may drive themselves, but may not be accompanied by younger swimmers.
3. Meet warm-up times, which are set by the meet hosts and published on-line on the team website, are to be strictly adhered to by all team members. In general, it is preferred that team members check with the coaches prior to leaving a meet. Should it become necessary for a swimmer to leave a meet early, his/her coach must be notified.
4. Swimmers are expected to check in with their coach before and after each of their events.
5. In preliminary and final meets, all swimmers who qualify to compete in the finals are expected to participate in the finals. All team members are strongly encouraged to return to the finals sessions to support the team and take advantage of the opportunity to learn from watching the finals. At times, alternate and relay positions open up that need to be filled.
6. All team members are expected to wear team suits and team caps for competition. If team suits are not available, then a black-colored suit must be worn. Your personal appearance shall be neat and appropriate at all times.



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7. Swimmers are expected to sit with the team and participate in all team meet activities and team meetings.
8. Team members and parents are expected to display proper respect and sportsmanship toward coaches, officials, meet administrators, and fellow competitors.
9. As a matter of team pride and courtesy to the meet host, swimmers are expected to leave the VSST team area in a neat and clean condition at the conclusion at each session of the meet.
10. In accordance with USA Swimming rules, parents are expected to remain in the spectator area and off the immediate competitive deck unless they are working the meet in an official capacity.
11. All swimmers must adhere to USA Swimming rules and regulations.
12. All questions swimmers or parents may have concerning meet results, an officiating call, or the conduct of a meet, should be referred to the VSST coaching staff.

DISCIPLINARY CODE AND PROCEDURES

The Vashon Seals Swim Team is established to promote the sport of swimming, and in the process, to help develop the character of individual swimmers. This Disciplinary Code shall apply to all behavior occurring at an activity or function that is associated with the Vashon Seals Swim Team, including but not limited to: swim practices, swim meets, team trips, team events, team outings, or individual group outings.

The Disciplinary Code also addresses objectionable behavior by members of the VSST occurring outside of team activities that bring the reputation of the team into disrepute. There are three types of objectionable behavior:

1. **Class I** – Behavior that is considered very severe and disruptive, possibly life threatening and/or in direct violation of governmental laws. These are actions that are so detrimental that it is not desirable to have such a person associated with the team.
2. **Class II** – Behavior that is considered disruptive; that has a detrimental effect on one's self, other members of the team, or the general public; that causes significant damage to the reputation of the team and/or its coaches; or that leads to the possible injury of self or other persons.
3. **Class III** – Behavior that is somewhat disruptive; does not portray the Vashon Seals Swim Team in a good light; and other actions that do not comply with the VSST Code of Conduct.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL

It is the Team's position that drugs, alcohol and tobacco products have no place in athletics. The use of alcohol or tobacco at a young age or the use of illegal drugs at any age is inconsistent with the team's vision. Peer pressure is a strong force. It is our hope that our swimmers understand the negative effects of drugs, alcohol, applicable Washington law and the team's position concerning this issue.

Should the Seals coaching staff discover that individual swimmers are misusing drugs or alcohol, the coach and representatives of the Board of Directors will contact the swimmer's parents for further discussion. Offences and penalties include, but are not limited to:

1. Possession or use of any of the following may require separation from the swim team: illegal drugs or drug paraphernalia; intoxicants, depending on gravity, or illegal performance enhancement substances.
2. Swimmers who give, sell, possess, use or are under the influence of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or drugs at Seals training facilities or while attending a team function may incur suspension, be placed on probation, or be dismissed.



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3. If Seals swimmers individually or in a group are found to engage in an activity where drugs or alcohol are involved, the team shall exercise jurisdiction and may apply severe individual penalties up to and including separation.
4. A swimmer may be immediately suspended from the team pending the outcome of any trial or the resolution of the matter. At the conclusion of the trial or upon resolution of the matter, the Board of Directors and the Head Coach will review the situation. Any conviction or plea bargain may be cause for permanent dismissal from the team.

Reporting Substance Abuse

In the event that a swimmer or parent needs to report misuse of drugs or alcohol, they should first approach the Head Coach or the President of the Board of Directors in person so any concerns or allegations can be discussed privately. No discussion should take place over email and under no circumstances should any swimmers be named in writing.

While those reporting may wish to remain anonymous, the team needs concrete evidence of inappropriate behavior before disciplinary action will be considered; hearsay and innuendo are insufficient grounds for dismissal.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

VSST recognizes that issues arise in a team, and that issues need to be addressed in a professional and positive manner. To achieve this, VSST has set in place a three-stage process:

1. **Verbal Discussion:** Often a matter can be resolved by direct communication. Parents are encouraged to contact the Head Coach or a VSST board member for an informal discussion. Many concerns can be swiftly addressed before an issue arises.
2. **Board Discussion:** If, after verbal discussion, a situation remains unresolved, the issue may be formally documented and addressed by the VSST board. Every effort will be made at this stage to find a mutually agreeable solution.
3. **Resignation:** In the unlikely event that a solution cannot be found, a swimmer may submit her/his written resignation, giving 30 days notice that s/he will be leaving the team. We truly see this as a last resort, and will endeavor to work with a family as much as is reasonable to avoid this outcome.