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FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
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# **TITUSVILLE YMCA**

## **SWIM TEAM**

### **HANDBOOK**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome to the Titusville YMCA Swim Team .....	3
YMCA Youth Sports Philosophy .....	3
Our Mission/Objectives .....	3
Character Counts – Values to Live By .....	3
Code of Conduct .....	3
Team Information and General Rules .....	5
Objective	
Attire	
Attendance at Practice	
Participation at Practice	
Competition Guidelines.....	6
Participation in Competitions	
Parent Transportation	
Meet Packing List .....	7
Dual Meet Locations .....	7
Competition and Teammates .....	7
Coaches .....	7
Governing Rules .....	7
General Meet Rules	
Eligibility.....	8
District Qualifying Times .....	8
Registration and Fees .....	8
Online Registration Form	
Fees/ Expenses	
Fundraising .....	9
Parental Involvement .....	9
Meet Terms .....	10
Swim Team Terms .....	10
Team Communication and Contact Information.....	11

## Welcome to the Titusville YMCA Swim Team

The policy handbook for our team has been developed to give the swimmers and parents a better understanding of what is expected of everyone involved. It is our desire to keep everyone informed to help make the swim team experience a positive one.

## YMCA Youth Sports Philosophy

Titusville YMCA Youth Sports Programs focus on youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. The 4 Core Values of the YMCA are also found in our sports programs by showing respect, honesty, responsibility and caring for teammates, opponents, coaches, officials and fans. The purpose of YMCA youth sports is to provide a wholesome environment where young people are given the opportunity to build self-esteem, develop assets that assist in teaching communication, learn the importance of staying fit, enhance their leadership skills and have FUN. It is the goal of the YMCA to provide youth sports programs that furnish participants with sport specific skills and values that are useful on the court, playing field, gym or in relationships with family and friends.

## Our Mission/Objectives

The purpose of any YMCA program is to help participants grow spiritually, mentally and physically. There are seven objectives that characterize all YMCA Programs:

- Grow Personally – A positive competitive swim team experience can build a child's self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Learn Values – Honesty, respect, caring and responsibility
- Improve Personal Relations – Swimmers learn to care and communicate with teammates.
- Appreciate Diversity – Swimmers learn to respect people regardless of age, abilities, income, race, religion, culture or beliefs.
- Become Better Leaders – Swimmers learn to give and take when necessary to work toward the common good of the team.
- Develop Specific Skills - Swimmers will learn skills and progressions necessary to help them succeed in the sport.
- Have Fun – Fun and humor are vital to a quality competitive swim team experience.

## Character Counts – Values to Live By

**Caring** – Putting others before yourself  
Be thoughtful, considerate and helpful to others on your team  
Thank your coaches & meet officials  
Tell your family you appreciate their support

**Respect** – To treat others as you would have them treat you  
Appreciate your coach  
Be considerate and polite to the officials  
Be a good listener and always be thoughtful of others

**Honesty** – To tell the truth  
Follow the rules  
Always set a good example by what you say and do  
Be fair to other swimmers

**Responsibility** – To do what you should  
Be on time to practices and competitions  
Always give your best effort  
Keep your practice and competition site clean and free of litter

## Code of Conduct

As a Titusville YMCA Swimmer, you are representing the Titusville YMCA, and it is a privilege that carries with it responsibilities to the YMCA, the Titusville Area School District, to the team, and to the community. The swimmer is expected to act in a manner that will reflect favorably on all of the above. Failure to comply with these expectations will result in disciplinary action, suspension, or dismissal from the team.

### Participant Code of Conduct

As a participant, representing the Titusville YMCA:

- I understand that participation in sports is a privilege that should not be taken for granted.

- I will conform to all rules, regulations and procedures of the Titusville YMCA, TYST, NWPYSL, and USA Swimming.
- I will conduct myself in a manner that positively represents myself, my team, my family, and my community.
- I will treat coaches, teammates, officials, volunteers, and competitors with respect. Disrespect or failure to obey instructions will not be tolerated from any athlete.
- I will respect the property of others, including all facilities.
- I will compete/participate in all of my events to the best of my ability.
- I will be on time for practices, meets and swim team functions.
- I will practice to the best of my ability and practice time will be used as a useful part of my training and will not be abused by loud or disruptive behavior. I understand that disruptive behavior is grounds for removal.
- I will not in any way endanger the safety of another participant.
- I will support my fellow teammates. All comments related to performance will be strictly positive.
- I will put the needs of the team before my own and place greater importance on the "we", rather than the "me".
- I will wear YMCA brand compliant team gear when receiving awards.
- I will accept coaches decisions about individual entries and relays with dignity and respect.

**I further acknowledge that the following conduct is unacceptable and will NOT be tolerated**

- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products or illegal drugs
- Use of profanity, obscene gestures, inappropriate or threatening language
- Intentional contact or fighting

Swimmers are expected to follow the spirit of the rules as well as the specific rules. The coach must adapt this philosophy to an infinite number of situations. Swimmers are asked to respect the coach's directions and give their full cooperation. Cooperation with teammates and staff will produce a productive practice environment and competitive environment for all.

**Participant Consequences to Violation of the Code of Conduct**

- Coach will give the child a specific warning about the observed behavior. The child may be removed from the remainder of that practice or event.
- Upon a second occurrence, the parent will be notified and the child will be removed from the program for an amount of time specified by the head coach.
- If a child is removed from practice for any length of time, a parent will be required to accompany the child at practice for the length of time determined by the coach.
- If the same behavior occurs a third time, the parent will be notified of a meeting with the parents, head coach, and YMCA administration that will determine the appropriate course of action.
- Repeated infractions may result in the removal of the child from the program. No fees will be refunded.
- The head coach and YMCA administration reserve the right to skip steps in the chain of consequences dependent on the severity of the violation.

**Parent Code of Conduct**

- I will provide a supportive, positive athletic environment where children will be able to enjoy sports' participation and maintain a proper perspective concerning winning.
- I will place greater emphasis on effort and improvement, than on place or time standards.
- I will encourage my child to model respectful behavior to all individuals in all situations.
- I will teach my child to place greater emphasis on what is best for the team rather than what is in their own personal best interest. "We>Me"
- I will model positive sportsmanship and respect toward coaches at competitions and in the community.
- I will not publicly or electronically confront coaches--I will set-up a private meeting that does not disrupt the coaches' ability to do their job and communicate with respect.

- I will maintain my role as a parent and understand that-- Coaches, coach; officials, officiate; and parents, parent.
- I understand that my presence at practice is a privilege and that I will be asked to leave if I interfere with coaching.
- I will separate my own ego and wants from the accomplishments of my child.
- I understand that the money and time invested is less about my child's times or places and significantly more about the life lessons the sport teaches.
- I will provide unconditional love and support regardless of the athletic performance of my child.
- I will help my child keep proper perspective by focusing on the elements that they can control – attitude, effort, and contributions to the team.
- I understand that no child is going to the Olympics tomorrow, and will help my child understand that progress takes time, perseverance, hard work, and dedication.
- I will only discuss participation time, team strategy, etc. with coaches and YMCA administration in a respectful manner and at an appropriate time.
- I will encourage my child to discuss concerns regarding performance and other issues with the coaching staff.
- I will respect the team rules adopted by Titusville YMCA, TYST, NWPYSL, and USA Swimming and will accept all consequences if rules are broken.
- I understand that my behavior may affect the privileges of my child.

#### **Parent Consequences to Violation of the Code of Conduct**

- Parental infractions will be discussed by the head coach and YMCA administration to decide the appropriate course of action.
- Violations may warrant: verbal warnings, swimmer suspension, parental suspension, and if the problem persists or is severe enough, possible expulsion from the team for both the parent and swimmer.

### **Team Information and General Rules**

**Objective:** The goal of the Titusville YMCA Swim Team is to provide swimmers with the opportunity to train and compete in a positive and productive atmosphere.

#### **Attire**

**Practice:** Swim suits with appropriate coverage are the only acceptable attire for practices. If a suit is too worn or revealing, the swimmer will discreetly be asked to change. Long hair should be secured with a swim cap. Personal items should not be brought to practices. The YMCA/TASD is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

**Competition:** Team swim suits are ordered at the beginning of the season with information to be provided when available. These are optional and are not a requirement for a swimmer to participate. However, attire must be appropriate for competition. Females must wear a one-piece swimsuit and boys can either wear swim trunks or jammers; they must be compliant with USA swimming rules. Do not permit swimmers to wear team suits for practice as they will not last the entire season.

#### **Attendance at Practice**

It is expected that swimmers will attend all practices. Acceptable excuses to miss practice are illness, family event, school function, inclement weather, and participation in another sport. Swimmers will not be penalized for missing practice. However, it may factor into decision-making for championship relays.

#### **Participation at Practice**

Swim team practice schedules will be posted on the BAND app. Changes to the schedule will be posted as a notification.

Swimmers should arrive early, dressed, and ready to enter the pool at start time. Full participation is expected. Practices will focus on improving swim technique, starts, turns, and building endurance. Coaches will also work with swimmers on goal setting and teamwork.

If you are late, check in with the coach for instructions. Swimmers are expected to stay in the pool and active for the duration of practice, leaving only to use the restroom.

## **Competition Guidelines**

### **Participation in Competitions**

It is expected that all team members will participate in ALL dual meets as well as League Championships. An event will be posted for each meet for parents to RSVP attendance. The RSVP expires on the Wednesday preceding the meet at 5:00 pm. A competition schedule will be given out as soon as it is available.

### **Participants**

- Swimmers should be in uniform and ready to compete when they arrive.
- Swimmers will wait with their parent/guardian until a coach arrives and directs them to the deck.
- Each athlete should accept his/her place in the line-up with dignity and without criticism. A competition is not a place for uncontrolled emotions.
- Swimmers are expected to stay with their own team for the duration of the competition.
- Swimmers may not be in the stands and must let a coach know if they leave the competition deck to use the restroom, etc.
- Swimmers may meet parents at the concession area if they need money for a snack.
- Swimmers may not leave the deck to sit with friends and family.
- Swimmers are expected to stay on the deck and in uniform until dismissed by a coach.
- Swimmers should respect and positively support other swimmers at all times.
- Swimmers must wear YMCA brand compliant team gear to receive awards.
- \*Parents: Please be aware that your child will need to be at the pool five to six hours for a meet, from warm-ups to awards. Plan accordingly.

### **Parent/Guardian**

- Parents, friends, and relatives of the swimmer are NOT ALLOWED onto the competitive deck, unless volunteering at a home meet. You must remain in the spectator's area. In case of injury during the competition, please stay in the spectator area until your child's coach flags you onto the deck.
- Do NOT coach your child. Coaches should coach; everyone else should encourage. Injury may result from changing the swimmer's focus away from the coach's instruction.
- Any questions about the meet or child's times need to be directed to the coaches. Officials should not be approached. Approaching an official is at the discretion of the coach.
- Do not contact a YMCA or coaches that are sponsoring the event. Please ask one of the swimmers' coaches for any directions or information you may need.
- Be courteous, respectful and polite to all officials, hosts, competitors and coaches.
- Be positive and courteous when "cheering on" all swimmers.
- If you have any questions regarding the competition or your child's times, please speak with a coach after the competition.
- Please do not compare the performance of your child to other children.

### **Items to Pack for a Meet/Invitational**

- Both a team swim suit and a backup suit
- Swim cap and goggles (backups if you have them)
- Minimum of 2 towels
- On-deck clothes – sweats and/or tee shirt & shorts
- Permanent marker – to write events on swimmer's hand/arm
- Snacks and drink, preferably nutritional (or money for concession stand)

- Bring things to do between events: Books, earphones, etc. Swimmers may bring electronic devices which can be silenced. However, care must be taken as the YMCA is not responsible for loss or damage to personal items. We do, however, encourage every swimmer to pay attention and cheer for fellow teammates.
- You may want to pack extra clothes and towels for an invitational.

### **Parent Transportation**

Families are responsible for transportation to and from competitions. The addresses for away-meet locations are listed below. Parents who transport children to events should coordinate their travel to arrive at the time designated by the coach. Swimmers should arrive to the pool at least 20 minutes prior to warm-ups so they have ample time to get ready. Since some parents may be transporting children other than their own, and children may be riding with another parent, registration includes a "Passenger Waiver of Liability" that must be electronically signed.

## **DUAL MEET LOCATIONS**

### **Bradford**

Bradford YMCA  
59 Boylston St.  
Bradford, PA 16701

### **Corry**

Corry YMCA  
906 N. Center St.  
Corry, PA 16407

### **Eastside**

Harbor Creek High School  
6375 Buffalo Rd.  
Harbor Creek, PA 16421

### **Franklin**

Franklin YMCA  
111 West Park St.  
Franklin, PA 16323

### **Jamestown**

Jamestown High School  
350 E. Second St.  
Jamestown, NY 14701

### **Oil City**

Oil City YMCA  
7 Petroleum St.  
Oil City, PA 16301

### **Titusville**

Titusville High School  
302 E. Walnut St.  
Titusville, PA 16354

### **Warren**

Warren YMCA  
212 Lexington Ave.  
Warren, PA 16365

### **Sectional League Championships**

SPIRE Institute 5201  
SPIRE Circle  
Geneva, OH 44041

## **Competition and Teammates**

Despite what many people believe, swimming IS a team sport. We encourage healthy competition as a motivator to improve, but do not emphasize the focus on "beating" each other. Unsportsmanlike or disrespectful behavior toward teammates will not be tolerated.

You are a team. Behave as one. Cheer each other on, lift each other up.

## **Coaches**

All coaches will attend practices and competitions unless other arrangements have been made. The coach and any assistant coach(es) must have appropriate practice and meet attire and have the following certifications: Lifeguarding, CPR, AED, First Aid, Principles of Competitive Swimming and Diving, and Safety Training for Swim Coaches. Coaches agree to be on time and wearing appropriate clothing. Cell phones are not permitted during practice and competition times. Coaches are expected to be respectful of all YMCA policies.

## **Governing Rules**

The YMCA follows rules for swimming established by the governing body of USA Swimming. The coaches and meet officials have copies of the rules.

### **General Meet Rules**

- Do not put anything in the pool during a race. This can result in a disqualification for the swimmer.
- Swimmers must always stay behind the timers except when getting up to start a race

- When swimming relays, get out of the pool promptly after finishing your leg; otherwise it causes a problem with the touchpad and timing
- Glass containers are strictly prohibited on deck
- Swimmers are not permitted to get dressed until instructed to do so by a coach
- The YMCA/TASD are not responsible for lost/broken items

## Eligibility

There are separate standards for eligibility set by the YMCA of USA, the Northwest PA YMCA Swim League, and the Titusville YMCA Swim Team.

### YMCA of USA

- All swimmers must be YMCA members in good standing 30 days prior to their first competition.
- All swimmers must be YMCA members in good standing 90 days prior to a regional, district or state championship meet.
- Swimmers may not represent a YMCA team as an attached member of a separate USA team in a given season. Swimmers may not compete within 90 days of their last attached USA meet. Please see the "Swimming Addendum to the Rules that Govern YMCA Competitive Sports" for more information or speak with a coach.

<http://ymca.ymcaswimminganddiving.org/nats/Rules/SwimmingAddendum-RulesThatGovern.pdf>

### Northwest PA YMCA Swim League

- All USA swimmers must be registered as "unattached" on the USA Swimming database by October 1 to be eligible to compete in the NWPAYSL in the current season of YMCA swimming, unless the swimmer moved from another area.
- Swimmers must compete in a minimum of 4 closed (dual) meets in order to be eligible to compete at Sections. High school swimmers must compete in a minimum of 3 closed (dual) meets.
- Swimmers, ages 5-21, as determined by their age as of December 1, are eligible to compete. Swimmers who have graduated high school may participate so long as they have not represented a college team.

### Titusville YMCA Swim Team

- While there is no official "try-out" to join the team, there is a minimum swimming requirement of 1 length of freestyle in order to join the team. In addition, swimmers must be mature enough to follow team rules. Safety is our top priority. As such, it is ultimately the discretion of the coaching staff, as to whether a potential swimmer is ready to join the team based on these factors.

## District Qualifying Times

The YMCA PA West District Championship meet is a time standard meet, whereby swimmers must meet a minimum qualifying time to participate. These times are established by the State Committee before each season and apply to individuals and relay teams. Official times are recorded from dual meets, invitationals, and League Championships. Times will be made available to swimmers and parents by coaches. They are always posted on the YMCA PA Regional Swimming website:

[www.teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=ymcapa](http://www.teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=ymcapa)

## Registration and Fees

### Registration

All registration is to be completed online from the Titusville YMCA's website under the Program tab. Swimmers will not be permitted to practice until registered. It is vital to have adequate information to contact parents or guardians at all times. The form includes emergency contact information, medical conditions, transportation waivers, and agreement to the terms set forth in this handbook.

### Fees

The following fees are required to participate on the Titusville YMCA Swim Team:

**Titusville YMCA Membership:** The National YMCA of the USA league rules mandate that all swimmers must have a YMCA membership in good standing 30 days prior to the first meet to be eligible to compete. Memberships can be paid annually, quarterly or monthly through automatic draft.



**TYST Team Fee/New Swimmer Trial:** Monthly dues are to be paid the first day of the upcoming month. The fee structure is set on an annual basis. Discounts for siblings and high school swimmers not attending Y practice. New swimmers can opt to do a one-week trial for a small fee to see what competitive swimming is all about.

#### **Other Expenses:**

##### **Parents are responsible for:**

- Team suits, practice suits, goggles, team clothing, and other personal equipment for each swimmer (these are not mandatory expenses)
- Invitational expenses including event fees
- League Championship, District, State, and National entry fees

**\*\*We do not want the cost of participating to be a hindrance for anyone, and have financial aid available. Debi Sutley should be contacted via the BAND app to arrange for assistance.**

### **Fundraising**

**Management of the team is an expensive endeavor, and fundraising is necessary. Proceeds from fundraising go directly back into the running and maintenance of the team, i.e. equipment, lifeguard fees, coaching expenses, banquets, team parties, etc.**

We will hold mandatory fundraisers each year. By mandatory we mean that each team member is required to participate and turn in a set amount for that particular event. The goal for each fundraiser will be set and communicated to the parents. Before these fundraisers occur, they must be approved by the YMCA administration and United Way of the Titusville Region.

### **Parental Involvement**

Family involvement is critical to the success of the Titusville YMCA Swim Team. It is important that we all work together to provide a well-run program for the children. The team cannot run without adequate parent support. Those families not doing their share jeopardize the smooth management and operations of team events that can lead to burnout for families who consistently volunteer their time and effort.

We as parents and guardians agree to support our children and the TYST as follows:

#### **1. To provide support to our children in the following ways:**

- To be sure that your swimmer(s) make it to practice and meets on time
- Encourage and praise your swimmer(s) in all their endeavors
- Attend swim meets at home and away when possible

#### **2. Assist with Fundraisers:** (See Fundraisers for more detail)

#### **3. Volunteer Opportunities:** Throughout the season there are many different opportunities for parents to volunteer that require little or no experience. Opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Assist with team picture night
- Assist with year-end banquet
- Coordinate volunteers to assist with home swim meets
- Set up and tear down for meets
- Serve as timers/runners during meets
- Help seed and organize swimmers during meets
- Work as swim meet official (certification required)
- Operate the computer system during meets
- And many more!

### **Meet Terms**

- **Dual Meet** – mandatory regular-season meets between two teams
- **Invitational Meet** – an optional swim meet between multiple teams in the area. The event is sponsored by a particular team and used as a fundraiser for their team. Trophies and ribbons may be given at these meets. Swimmers can choose which events in their age group, both individual

events and relays, they wish to compete in. There is a fee for each event the swimmer competes in (usually around \$4.00 - \$6.00 per event)

- **League Championships** – a regional championship meet held in February of each year at the Spire Institute in Geneva, Ohio. Individual teams host the Sectional Championships on a rotating basis. All swimmers are expected to swim at sectionals. The coach chooses the events that the swimmer will swim at the sectional. Swimmers may swim a maximum of four events, one of which must be a relay. Points are tallied by team and the team with the most points takes home the McIntyre traveling trophy; named in honor of Jack McIntyre the longstanding coach of the Corry YMCA swim team.
- **District Championships** – There are three districts: East, Central, and West. Each district has a championship meet held on a weekend in March. The TYST is a part of the Western District. Swimmers must attain qualifying times in a particular event in order to swim at a district championship meet. Qualifying times are recorded from official meets though the season.
- **Pennsylvania YMCA Swimming Championship** – The top 6 finishers for each event from each district advance to States.
- **YMCA Short Course National Swimming Championships** – a time standard meet held at Greensboro Aquatic Center in April for the top YMCA swimmers in the USA.

## Swim Team Terms

**TYST:** Titusville YMCA Swim Team

**Age group** - Swimmers are divided into competition groups by age. The age group designations for YMCA swimming are:

8 & Under, 9/10, 11/12, 13/14, 15-21. A swimmer is assigned an age group based on his or her age as of December 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.

**Disqualification/DQ** - A swim is nullified due to the swimmer committing an infraction of a rule (ex. kicking flutter kick on butterfly or touching the wall with one hand on breaststroke).

**Drag/Dragsuit** - Drag is resistance against a swimmer's movement. A drag suit creates extra drag with excess material for the purpose of building strength and increasing a swimmer's ability to combat extra resistance.

**Dryland training** - Exercises performed outside the pool to improve overall fitness and enhance swimming performance.

**Event** - A particular swimming race (ex. 100 meter Freestyle, 200 yard Backstroke, 400 IM, etc.)

**False Start** - A swimmer moves forward or dives before the starter has sounded. A swimmer is disqualified if she/he does this.

**Heat** - Events are divided into heats. In each heat there is one swimmer in each lane swimming a particular event or race. The number of heats in each event depends on the number of competitors in each event.

**Heat Sheet** - A listing of the swimmers in each event, divided into heats and lanes (indicating which swimmers swim in each heat and lane).

**Official** - A certified judge on the pool deck who enforces swimming rules.

**Qualifying Time** - The maximum time needed to swim a particular event in a particular meet.

**Referee** - The official who has authority over all the other officials at a meet. He/she makes final decisions and **sees that a meet runs efficiently.**

**Scratch** - Removal of a swimmer from an event.

**Seeding** - Placement of a swimmer in an event based on their entry time in that event.

**Starter** - Official who starts each race by saying "Take your mark", then sounding a beep.

**Swim Banquet** - An end of season event for the swimmers and their families. It is held in mid-April on a date to be determined later. It is intended to be a fun event. The event will include an awards presentation.

**Timer** - Person, usually a parent volunteer, who uses a stopwatch to time a swimmer in each heat and record the swimmer's time on a card.

## **Team Communication and Contact Information**

We use an app, Band, as our main form of team communication. It can be accessed by downloading it from iTunes or the Google Play Store, as well as by visiting: [www.band.us](http://www.band.us) Our Band name is TYST Tigersharks. An invitation to join will be provided to parents once their swimmer is registered.

All team information will be regularly updated here including meet and practice schedules, sign-ups, announcements, etc.

If a parent or swimmer has a question or concern relating to potentially controversial or confidential subjects, it is asked that an appointment be made with the coach and/or YMCA administration.

We encourage open, respectful communication between parents/swimmers and coaches. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, please use the private messaging function of the app.

If there is a last minute emergency, or you need to speak with someone immediately:

Head Coach Jena Sutley                      (814) 673-3670