



U.S. Masters Swimming LMSC Community

*Building a Code of Conduct for your LMSC,
Club, or Facility to Support ALL Participants*

November 9, 2023

Welcome Everyone!



- The meeting will begin at the top of the hour; please stand by as everyone gets connected
- All attendees will be un-muted throughout the meeting. Feel free to turn your camera on!
- If you don't have a microphone, you can submit comments via the 'Chat' window



Building a Code of Conduct for your LMSC, Club, or Facility to Support ALL Participants

Representatives from the Diversity & Inclusion Committee will present an overview of the Standards of Conduct of USMS, and discuss the importance of each LMSC, each Club/Coach, and each Facility having a Code of Conduct to describe the list of activities that are sporting and are considered desirable and/or the list of activities that are un-sporting and are considered undesirable. It is important to have a definition of conduct and a process in place so that inappropriate volunteers, athletes, or staff members can be removed in order to keep Masters Swimming welcoming to all eligible participants.

Diversity & Inclusion Discussion Facilitators



Jeff Comings
&
Phyllis Quinn



Diversity & Inclusion Facilitators



Jeff Commings is Co-Founder (and coach) of Dolphins Of The Desert Swimming Academy, the host of USA Swimming's "Deck Pass Live" and a freelance journalist. Jeff is the first African-American to earn an individual medal in swimming at a major international competition (bronze medal in the 100-meter breaststroke, representing the United States at the 1991 Pan American Games in Havana, Cuba). He currently resides in Tucson, AZ. Jeff is an “At-Large” Board Member on the USMS BOD and is the Chair of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

Phyllis Quinn is the current chair of Pacific Masters swimming and chair of the USMS Long Distance committee. She has also served as the sanction chair for Pacific Masters open water events. She served on the Board of Directors for The Olympic Club for three years as well as several committees for the club for over 15 years.

Agenda



- What is a Code of Conduct?
- Standards of Conduct of USMS
- Why do you need to create a code of conduct?
 - For your facility
 - For your club
 - For your LMSC
- **How** do you create a code of Conduct?



What is a Code of Conduct?



From valamis.com:

- A ***code of conduct*** is a set of values, rules, standards, and principles outlining what employers (coaches) expect from staff (athletes) within an organization (swim team).
- Often codes of conduct take big picture ideas tied to the business's overall mission and core values and relate them to the behavior and practices they desire from staff (members) on a day-to-day basis.
- Creating a code of conduct is a statement from leadership laying out their expectations and communicating the ethical principles they feel are most fundamental to success. Generally, it reflects the culture already present, or the culture leadership is looking to promote.

What is a Code of Conduct?

- A Code of Conduct is *aspirational*; it describes the types of behavior considered sporting that all members should strive to achieve.
- From a practical perspective, a Code of Conduct must also describe what behaviors are considered unsporting and unacceptable, so that if the standards are violated, the offenders can be removed from the situation in order to protect other members.
 - You need a Code of Conduct, and you also need a process for enforcement
- View Bill Brenner's webinar on the basics of setting up a code of conduct:
 - [11/18/2021 Code of Conduct Webinar Recording](#)

Standards of Conduct of USMS



- ARTICLE 402: Conduct of Members
- 402.1 Standards of Conduct
- The opportunity to participate in Masters swimming is made possible by USMS. Members accept that this opportunity to participate is a privilege and as such shall conduct themselves with integrity and in a sporting manner. In matters relating to Masters swimming, members shall respect and protect the privileges of others who share this mission; therefore, the privileges of membership and participation may be withdrawn or denied if the conduct of a member or prospective member is inconsistent with the mission of the organization or the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it

Standards of Conduct of USMS



ARTICLE 402: Conduct of Members

- 402.1 Standards of Conduct

The opportunity to participate in Masters swimming is made possible by USMS. Members accept that this opportunity to participate is a privilege and as such shall conduct themselves with integrity and in a sporting manner. In matters relating to Masters swimming, members shall respect and protect the privileges of others who share this mission; therefore, the privileges of membership and participation may be withdrawn or denied if the conduct of a member or prospective member is inconsistent with the mission of the organization or the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it

- 402.2 Compliance With Rules and Regulations

It shall be the responsibility of all members to comply with the rules and regulations of USMS and the applicable rules, constitution, and bureau decisions of World Aquatics.

- 402.3 Enforcement

Any prospective member may be denied membership, and any member may be denied membership, censured, placed on probation, suspended, fined, or expelled from USMS if such member engages in any unsporting conduct listed in article 402.4.

Standards of Conduct of USMS



402.4 Unsporting Conduct

The following shall be considered unsporting conduct as it relates to Part 4:

- 402.4.1 Violation of the opportunity to participate, as set forth in article 401.
- 402.4.2 Discrimination in violation of article 501.3.
- 402.4.3 Any act of fraud, deception, or dishonesty in connection with any USMS related activity.
- 402.4.4 Knowingly providing false information including name, date of birth, age, or gender on USMS membership applications or meet entries.
- 402.4.5 Any intentional nonconsensual physical contact, obscene language or gesture, or other threatening language or conduct directed toward members, volunteers, staff, or bystanders in connection with USMS administrative activities, events, or workouts.

Standards of Conduct of USMS



402.4 Unsporting Conduct (Continued)

- 402.4.6 Any discrimination or harassment based on an individual's age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, genetic information, mental or physical disability, protected health and medical information, or any other status protected by federal, state, or local law, where applicable, directed toward members, volunteers, staff, or bystanders in connection with USMS administrative activities, events, or workouts. Application of Part 1: Swimming Rules regarding age groups, gender categories, swimwear, and guidelines for officiating swimmers with disabilities shall not be considered as violations of this article.
- 402.4.7 Any nonconsensual sexual conduct, pattern of unwelcome sexual advances, or other inappropriate sexually oriented behavior or action by a USMS member toward a member or any other person participating in any capacity whatsoever in the affairs or activities of USMS.

Standards of Conduct of USMS



402.4 Unsporting Conduct (Continued)

- 402.4.8 Any act, conduct, or omission that is detrimental to the image or reputation of USMS, an LMSC, or the sport of swimming.
- 402.4.9 Causing a credible and material risk to the safety of USMS members or others who may be present during USMS activities. A lifetime ban, declaration of permanent ineligibility, or permanent resignation of membership from a member organization of United States Aquatic Sports may be considered as evidence of a violation of this article 402.4.8.
- 402.4.10 Aiding or abetting another to engage in any of the foregoing violations.

Why do you need to create a Code of Conduct?



- Facility
- Club
- LMSC

How do you create a code of conduct?



Dolphins of the Desert Masters Code of Conduct Agreement (Created December 2022)

Dolphins of the Desert Masters strives to be one of the best swim teams in the greater Tucson area and Arizona. One of the hallmarks of a great swim team is how the athletes in that team work together to always create a welcoming and positive environment. To that end, and in accordance with a new initiative within U.S. Masters Swimming, our code of conduct encompasses all of the ideals that we want our athletes and coaches to adhere to when representing Dolphins of the Desert. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Swim practices
- Competitions, whether local, national, or international
- Any activity that is organized by U.S. Masters Swimming and its member teams

Participation in programs under the supervision of Dolphins of the Desert Swimming Academy, LLC (including Dolphins of the Desert Masters) shall not be denied due to a person's race, creed, gender, gender identity, age, religion, political affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin. Treating a teammate differently due to their race, creed, gender, gender identity, age, religion, political affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin will not be permitted at any time. Members shall obey all club, facility, and government-imposed laws, and share the pool responsibly and courteously.

Conversations or actions that are construed as offensive to any member should be avoided. Frank discussions might be welcomed, but when the conversation turns to berating someone for presenting differing ideas can become offensive and hurtful. This also includes conversations that berates or discriminates against another based on their race, creed, gender, gender identity, age, religion, political affiliation, disability, sexual orientation, or national origin.

How do you create a code of conduct?



Dolphins of the Desert Masters Code of Conduct Agreement (Created December 2022)

Volunteers will also refrain from any nonconsensual sexual conduct, pattern of unwelcome sexual advances, or other inappropriate sexually oriented behavior, discussion, or action by a member toward another member or any other person participating in any capacity whatsoever in the affairs or activities of Dolphins of the Desert Masters as mentioned above. Language that is sexual in nature may seem acceptable in an all-adult environment, but “locker room talk” and sexually-oriented jokes can be construed as offensive to someone within hearing distance. The best practice in a Masters swim team environment is to talk and act as if an underage child is in the facility.

How do you create a code of conduct?



Dolphins of the Desert Masters Code of Conduct Agreement (Created December 2022)

Transgender athlete policy

A transgender member will be allowed to participate in DDSA programs in accordance with his/her/their gender identity, irrespective of the sex listed on the athlete's birth certificate or other records and regardless of whether the athlete has undergone any medical procedure. In all cases, teammates, coaches, and all others should refer to a transgender athlete by the name and pronoun this person prefers (he/she/they). Any athlete who takes part in DDSA programs shall not be made to feel unsafe by another athlete due to the above criteria. Athletes in DDSA programs, as well as DDSA employees, are expected to adhere to the above policies, both in word and action.

How do you create a code of conduct?



Dolphins of the Desert Masters Code of Conduct Agreement (Created December 2022)

Anti-bullying policy

Bullying can take place among adults, though not always in the same way as it happens among children. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Dolphins of the Desert Masters and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim.

Bullying is the severe or repeated use, regardless of when or where it may occur, by one or more team participants of an oral, written, electronic or technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission) , or a physical act or gesture , or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;

- Placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- Creating a hostile environment for the other member at any team activity.
- Infringing on the rights of the other member at any team activity;
- Materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any team activity (as listed above).

If bullying does occur, all athletes should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach or supervisor. Trying to deal with the situation yourself is not always the best course of action.

Pacific Masters Swimming LMSC



- Why- we did not have a code of conduct for volunteer at meetings, swim events or events attended where they represent our LMSC.
- How- we looked at various plans and decide to try and keep it very simple.
- But we also need a process to deal with unacceptable behavior.

Pacific Masters Code of Conduct



Pacific Masters volunteers are expected to act respectful towards other Pacific Masters volunteers. We can disagree with each other's point of view but should not be disrespectful when expressing ourselves. This code of conduct highlights events and activities that are included in the expectations set forth. This document also describes a process to handle non-compliant behavior at any Pacific Masters event or function.

All members are expected to maintain an environment of respect. Frank discussions can be held. Please remember to speak about the issue being discussed, not about the person who presented their ideas. Behavior that is physically or verbally abusive is unacceptable at any Pacific Masters– sponsored activity, or event.

Volunteers will refrain from any intentional nonconsensual physical contact, obscene language or gestures, or other threatening language or conduct directed toward other members, coaches, facility staff, volunteers, and any other person participating in any capacity whatsoever in the affairs and activities of Pacific Masters

Volunteers will also refrain from any nonconsensual sexual conduct, pattern of unwelcome sexual advances, or other inappropriate sexually oriented behavior or action by a member toward another member or any other person participating in any capacity whatsoever in the affairs or activities of Pacific Masters Volunteers are expected to be respectful to all attending meetings such as the Monthly Pacific Masters meeting, any USMS virtual or in person committee meeting, or the USMS annual meeting. It is important to be mindful of when it is appropriate to speak as an individual or on behalf of Pacific Masters. Conflicts of Interest should be considered before speaking at any meeting.

Communication via E-Mail is also a part of this code of conduct. Emails should be polite, concise, and state the facts regarding any issue to be discussed.

Volunteering at an official event of function of Pacific Masters Swimming

As a volunteer for Pacific Masters, you represent the integrity and principles that our organization is founded upon. Please see Article 4 of the USMS rule book for examples of behavior that is unacceptable. *This code of conduct applies to a Pacific Masters member who request to volunteer at an event. This code of conduct does not apply to the right to compete at a Pacific Master event. (See Article 4 of the USMS rule book.)*

Violating the Code of Conduct

Each Pacific Masters volunteer member will use their best efforts to comply with the Code of Conduct. Failure to comply will subject the violating volunteer to the following progressive discipline:

Warning. Upon a vote of 2/3 of the executive committee, or at the discretion of the Chair, a Warning Letter may be issued to the violating volunteer to correct his/her behavior. If the volunteer corrects the behavior, no further action is necessary.

Reprimand. If the violation continues, or worsens, upon a vote of 2/3 of the executive committee, a Reprimand Letter may be issued to the violating volunteer member to correct his/her behavior.

Removal or suspension as a volunteer. If the violation continues, or worsens, upon a vote of 2/3 of the executive committee the violating volunteer may be denied the request to volunteer at a future event for a period to be determined by the executive committee. Other corrective action by also be included.

Take aways



- Have a Code of conduct
- Have a Process to deal with issues
- Follow the Code and the Process
- Why- it may save you from having to deal with the USMS grievance process
- Why - It sets expectations within the club/LMSC where everyone is respected and valued.

Resource Links / Contact Info



- Diversity & Inclusion
 - <https://www.usms.org/about-usms/diversity-and-inclusion>
- [Standards for USMS board of directors](#)
- [National Board of Review Grievance Procedures](#)
- [USMS Rule Book Part 4](#)
- [Dolphins of the Desert Code of conduct](#)
- [Pacific Masters Swimming – Volunteer Code of Conduct](#)

Contact Info:

Jeff Commings: jeffswim@aol.com

Phyllis Quinn: peq1ekc1@aol.com