

SafeSplashMN

Plan to safely return **Competitive Swimmers**
to Minnesota's Pools by June 1

Fully adhering to Minnesota Department of Health Guidance for Social
Distancing in Youth Sports

SafeSplashMN

Request for Modification

Opening of Pools for Limited Purpose: Supervised Training of Competitive Swimmers

Petition to open pools for the limited purpose of competitive swim practice

- Indoor and outdoor pools are currently closed for all purposes. However, supervised training of competitive swimmers presents a significantly lower COVID-19 risk than recreational swimming.
- Many competitive swim teams and pool owners are prepared to meet and exceed the new MN Department of Health (MDH) Youth Sports guidelines and the SafeSplashMN safety protocols as outlined below.
- A restricted opening of pools for this limited purpose, following all SafeSplashMN and MDH protocols, would enable pool owners and teams to cautiously and safely resume partial operations alongside other youth sports on June 1.

Why advocate for the Safe Return to MN Pools?

- MN's competitive youth swimmers, adult Masters swimmers, Olympic Trial qualifiers and college scholarship candidates are anxious to resume training.
- A safe return to the pool will allow some to rebuild their physical and mental health, as others regain the competitive edge necessary to retain college scholarships or prepare for next year's Olympic Trials without leaving MN.
- After significant research, a consortium of Minnesota's largest swim teams, educators and pool operators proposes the SafeSplashMN plan, outlined below, to cautiously and safely return competitive swimmers to MN pools.
- Via very small, socially distant training pods, SafeSplashMN meets and exceeds MDH Youth Sports Guidelines along with best practices of CDC, USA Swimming, Minnesota Swimming, Inc. (MNSI) and swim teams nationwide.

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Overview

Core Requirements

Daily Practice

Swift Response

Roll-out Objectives

- This SafeSplashMN overview addresses:
 - **Core Requirements** and necessary changes to swim training as we protect Minnesota's swimmers from COVID-19 related threats. These core requirements include social distancing, zero contact, small practice pods, and other health etiquette.
 - A preview of how **Daily Practice** might look for teams that follow the SafeSplashMN plan.
 - **Swift Response** protocols that teams commit to follow if they encounter a new COVID-19 risk or infection impacting a practice pod.
 - **Roll-out Objectives** for teams that identify pool facilities willing to align to the SafeSplashMN requirements, and ongoing support plans for all MN teams.

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Core Requirements

Social Distance

Zero Contact

Practice Pods

Health Etiquette

Core Requirement 1: Social Distance Overview

- Only swimmers, instructors and safety personnel who undergo daily health screening are allowed into the facility and/or pool area. No observers.
- All must maintain a social distance of at least 6 feet from non-family members at all times, in and out of the pool, as marked via decals on facility floors and lane lines, and must never remain in a single location for an extended period.
- All swimmers breathe in a single direction, always away from the faces of other swimmers, and always at a distance greater than 6 feet.

Core Requirement 2: Zero Contact Overview

- Zero contact from person-to-person, zero contact from person-to-shared-equipment and minimal, controlled contact with facility surfaces which are regularly sanitized and disinfected after the departure of each pod.
- Swimmers must arrive wearing swimsuits/warmups and masks, with no extraneous equipment or clothing. Locker rooms are closed.
- Swimmers are taught to safely enter the pool in their pre-designated lane with minimal contact to surfaces (which are repeatedly disinfected prior to the entrance of each new pod).

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Core Requirements

Social Distance

Zero Contact

Practice Pods

Health Etiquette

Core Requirement 3: Practice Pods

- All swimmers are assigned to a regular practice pod of fewer than 10.
- Practice pods do not intermix with each other in any way.
- All Minnesota competitions are cancelled. Teams permitted to train as part of SafeSplashMN commit not to train or compete out of state without approval.
- All swimmers are contactless (outside of immediate family members), maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet at all times.

Core Requirement 4: Health Etiquette Overview

- All swimmers must wear masks when not swimming.
- Daily health checks and temperature checks must be performed prior to entry.
- Locker rooms are closed for general use. Swimmers arrive ready to swim.
- If emergency bathroom or shower use is required, only one swimmer will be allowed in the bathroom, and it must be disinfected immediately after use.
- Pool owners and Certified Pool Operators commit to employ enhanced HVAC ventilation and air exchange, along with optimized chlorine and sanitation levels. This significantly improves the safety of indoor pools

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Daily Practice Example

Entering Facility

Before Swimming

In the Pool

Leaving the Pool

How Might Practice Look at a Special-Purpose Facility?

Daily Practice Stage 1: Entering the Facility

- 15 minutes prior to practice, each swimmer approaches the one-way lobby entry, at least 6 feet apart in a single-file line, wearing a mask.
- Each day, each swimmer and coach is screened with a series of CDC-recommended questions and a temperature check.
- Each swimmer arrives in their swimsuit, maybe covered with warm-ups, carrying ONLY a towel, water bottle, cap and goggles (with approval, some may also require personal equipment that has been fully sanitized).

Daily Practice Stage 2: Before Swimming

- Each swimmer, wearing a mask, proceeds from screening to their pre-assigned, marked position in the lobby, at least 6 feet apart.
- When their pod is called to the pool area, each swimmer joins a single file line, at least 6 feet apart, to leave their mask, towel and warm-ups in their pre-assigned, marked, socially-distant poolside position.
- Each swimmer enters their pre-assigned lane, at least 6+ feet apart, and maintains social distance at all times while swimming.

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Daily Practice Example

Entering Facility

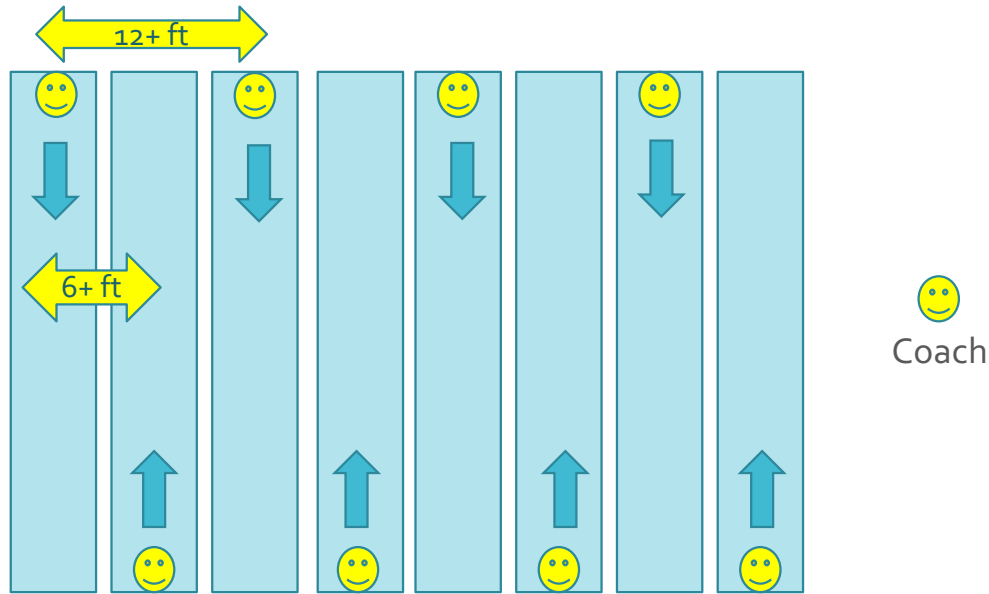
Before Swimming

In the Pool

Leaving the Pool

Daily Practice Stage 3: Social Distancing in the Pool

- Each pool layout will drive minor difference in the way each team optimally enforces social distancing of 6+ feet.
- Below is an example from one team in one venue: an 8 lane pool where the width of each lane is 6+feet.



- In this example, a practice group of 8 swimmers and 1 coach maintains a social distance of 12+ feet for the majority of their practice, periodically “crossing” at 6+ feet. All swimmers breathe in a single direction, away from the faces of others.

Daily Practice Stage 4: Leaving the Pool

- One-by-one, athletes collect their belongings, and exit to parking lot through a one-way pool-deck door in their swimsuits, never crossing paths with the next pod of athletes.

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Swift Response

Roll-out Objectives

Swift Response to any new COVID-19 Risks or Infections

- The health of swimmers, coaches, staff and their families must be the top priority. Teams will enforce MDH and CDC guidance to stay home whenever sick or exposed.
- Anyone who fails the daily health screen will not be allowed to enter. A doctor's note or negative COVID-19 test is required to return.
- Any positive COVID-19 tests must be reported immediately. In the event of a positive test, teams will enforce strict procedures including facility deep cleaning and contact tracing followed by CDC-recommended self-isolation and/or testing of all identified contacts.

Roll-out Objectives

- The Consortium has coaches, athletes and families who are trained and ready to fully align with SafeSplashMN and help other teams do the same.
- To fully and safely extend the reach of this opportunity, the Consortium commits to make their detailed startup plans and research available to any of Minnesota's teams, representing 65 clubs, high schools, YMCAs and more.
- Safely returning competitive swimmers to MN pools by June 1 also requires MN to open pools for the purpose of supervised competitive swim practice as soon as teams, swimmers, pool owners and operators are prepared to abide by all SafeSplashMN safety protocols.

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Consortium Members

Considering interests of competitive swimmers and pool operators throughout MN

Consortium Members

- The Consortium that researched and built this recommendation includes:
 - Swim teams: Aquajets, Edina Swim Club, Riptide Swimming; 3 of the 4 largest teams in MN, comprising approximately 15% of Minnesota's club swimmers. Like other clubs, the consortium is training 10+ 2021 Olympic trial hopefuls, and a significant number of college scholarship winners who are concerned about losing their competitive edge and their college funding.
 - Swim safety educators: Wise Swim School; advocating for the safety and ongoing viability of competitive swimming in MN.
 - Certified Pool Operators: Aquajet Aquatic Center, Bluewater Aquatic Center, WE Swim; researching plans for the safest possible indoor restricted pool operation; managing risks related to COVID-19.

Consideration of Swimmers Statewide

- The viability of competitive swimming in Minnesota requires returning all competitive athletes to the water as soon as their teams, families and pool operators are prepared to safely do so.
- Therefore, the Consortium commits to make their detailed startup plans and research available to all Minnesota teams and pool operators willing to commit to these SafeSplashMN requirements.