



NCSA Chaperone Procedures

Prior to travel, close communication will be held primarily with the Head Coach along with the Lead Chaperone and possibly their team.

Planning needs to happen in each of the areas below, modified depending on the location, timing of the swim meet, number of swimmers going, and so on. The areas of responsibility can be modified (e.g., the Head Coach may do some, the Lead Chaperone others). But the following areas need to be considered, in ADDITION to the Chaperone Policy which is also in effect.

Lodging

- The booking shall be done as far in advance as possible. Contact several hotel chains to see who can provide the best pricing. This will be done in co-operation with the Head Coach and or the Director of Competition.
- It would be beneficial if lodging could provide a place to eat (either the hotel's own restaurant or use of banquet facilities and order in food).
- Make sure that all rooms are booked on the same floor of the hotel when possible.
- If this is not achievable try and keep the number of floor to as few as possible.
- Two Queen or Two Double beds shall be the preferred room arrangement.
- For smaller team Events of multi-day hotel stays, look to book hotels that have kitchenette facilities as this can reduce the cost of eating meals out and save commute times for participants on competition days.
- If a kitchenette is not available inquire to see if a mini-fridge can be rented for the duration of the stay in the Chaperone room.

Long Distance Travel

Every effort will be made to minimize the number of stops during long distance travel.

Aircraft Travel

- Events or meets where participants may fly, chaperones may want to look at encouraging the participants to have their own forms of entertainment (tablet, laptop, personal audio device, books, etc.).

- Consider any and all flight restrictions, not only for the participants, but also for any equipment needs of the chaperones (e.g., knives, slow cookers, etc.).

Bus or Van Travel

- When long distance travel is involved make sure that there is some form of entertainment for the participants. This might include items like movies, books or games on the bus.
- If possible, and distance warrants, crock-pots or other forms of “warmed” food are helpful to reduce stops and keep participants fed particularly if participants are swimming soon after arrival or “food stops” cannot be guaranteed.
- The Lead Chaperone may decide to request that participants bring a breakfast, lunch and/or dinner of their own during travel. Where applicable, ensure that proper communication is sent out to parents and legal guardians to ensure that any food brought on the trip does not compromise the health or safety of another other participants (e.g. food allergies). Follow-up by monitoring during travel.
- Coolers, cutting boards, can openers and utensils should be packed and available.

Task Management

- If there is more than one chaperone, divide and conquer. For instance, think about who might be handling food preparation and who might be traveling with the swimmers.
- Developing a schedule spreadsheet can be very helpful. Portrait style (vertical) is easier to follow, to individually print the day, and therefore to read.
- The list of swimmers based on first name then last name’s initial worked better for checking-in at meal times and for knowing the room assignation.
- Get ALL the medical forms of the participants that are going as soon as possible, in order to plan meals and set up the master list in a timely fashion.
- Use the session reports to help with planning. Be aware of the Event, heat and start times; be prepared for unexpected Event changes.
- Where an Event has younger swimmers (12 & under) participating at differing times than those of older participants it may be in the best interest of the younger participants to return to the hotel earlier to make sure a solid rest is achieved. If applicable, ensure that an acceptable ratio of chaperones remains with both groups of swimmers.

Before Leaving

- Send email to parents with relevant details. Also, the parental responsibilities for chaperoned meets are in the NCSA Handbook.

- Send out pre-order meal forms.
- Prepurchase certain items that may not be available at the stores you plan to shop at (e.g., Gatorade), and any items that will be needed before a shopping trip is possible (e.g., paper plates for pizza).
- Organize food.

Meals

- The Lead Chaperone shall coordinate with their team on all meals. It should be a priority to get nutritious food into the swimmers as soon as possible after the end of swimming.
- Advanced planning for restaurants will save time, effort and reduce delays.
- It is helpful to try and get restaurant menus ahead of time. Often “chain or franchise” restaurants have their menus on-line.
- Whenever possible, use pre-order meal forms to determine what the order will be.
- Where possible bring food into the lodging or hotel (the hotels own restaurant or banquet facilities might be available).
- NCSA will reimburse chaperones for all food purchased for consumption by the participants. All receipts should be kept and submitted with a completed expense form to the Head Coach for approval, within 30 days of the event, and in turn submitted to the NCSA Treasurer for reimbursement. The Head Coach will then complete the approval process within 48 hours. The NCSA expense payment form is found on the website, in the members documents area.
- Participants may have some special requirements and these should be addressed as best as possible prior to the trip. See Medical Forms of participants.
- Participants must realize that specialty meals will NOT be provided and unless there are religious, medical or other conditions; what the chaperones arrange will be the meal. However, the chaperones should do the best they can to provide non-meat and non-nut meal options.

Food Preparation

- Fruits and vegetables are great snacks. Cut up fruit goes better than whole fruit. Mandarin oranges are awesome.
- Bring cutting boards and knives when possible. May also need toasters, kettles, and slow cookers.
- Figure out how the food will be served. Foil trays work well. Bring or buy at loonie store.
- Breakfast is an easy meal to set up if you need to choose.
- Paper plates, cups and cutlery are easier than kids’ bringing their own.

- Food actually used in the past is available in the Chaperone Binder. That should give an idea of the quantities and types of items used in the past.
- If you do not have a specific room provided by the hotel for food, buffet service out of 1 room works well.
- Pre-plan each meal generically.
- Break each meal down into a detailed shopping list (Excel works). Sort Excel list into areas of the store and by days necessary, especially if shopping time is limited.
- Keep in mind the storage facilities that you might have once at the hotel.
- Apparently Costco does not take returns of any “refrigerated” or produce type items, so shop with a mind not to return anything like this.
- If you can, split shopping into 2 trips so that the extras from the first trip can be used for the other days, and that the run rate can be adjusted.
- In general, the participants will eat less later in the meet than at the beginning as they have probably not finished all the food in their bags already.
- As much as possible, let the participants pack their own snacks/lunches/breakfasts etc. as they know what they want and will finish most, and it is less work for you.
- Be aware of allergies. Also be sure to mark down (if parents are providing any baking) as the baking comes in as much as possible.
- Finally, traveling in other places might increase costs due to extra taxes, or other reasons. Budget accordingly!!

At the Beginning of the Event

- All chaperones need to introduce themselves to the participants and confirm with them how they would like to be addressed (e.g., Mr. Doe or John). Keep in mind that participants may know you; however, setting the stage can help in reducing uncomfortable or awkward moments.
- Ensure that each swimmer has the chaperone’s relevant information, hotel name, phone number and room number.
- Remind swimmers to leave the change rooms and stands tidy and to clean up after themselves.

Journey Management

- Think about how the participants will travel while at the location. On a van, bus, foot? Be sure to implement journey management to ensure that all the participants are safe during travel, and that each participant is accounted for properly.

- Ensure the assassins game has started. The assassins' game is a hit among the kids and allows the enforcing of the rule of swimmers not being by themselves at any time during the trip.
- If the participants will be in separate vehicles, make sure that each participant is accounted for.
- If the participants are walking, make sure they walk together (girls in groups of at least 3), keeping older and younger swimmers together. If necessary, the chaperones may want to use texting between points if the walk is longer and the chaperones are not accompanying the participants the entire way. Make sure the participants know the way. Time the travel distance, and communicate to ensure that the participants stay safe.

At the Pool

- Think about food that will be provided at the pool, as well as any needed refrigeration of items at the pool.
- Ensure that extra snacks and Gatorade powder is at the pool.
- From experience, physically passing a plate of fruit (or whatever snacks are available) is more effective than reminders.
- Having captains assigned amongst the participants for boys and girls allows easy communication of messages between the chaperones and the participants.

At All Times

- Have ready access to the relevant parts of the Chaperone Binder/Kit, including the relevant swimmer information, the emergency first aid kit, and the Emergency Plan. Think about how these items will be transported between places. If on foot, a backpack could prove easier than a duffel bag.
- To keep things lighter, it may make more sense for each of the chaperones to have a copy of the medical and contact lists in the first-aid kit and on pdf on their personal devices (all this information needs to be destroyed at the end of the meet). (The actual binder would then stay at the hotel).
- Using a spreadsheet program like Excel is very helpful. In it, after creating a "database" of the names of the athletes, coaches and chaperones, their contact information, gender, and their emergency medical information (based on the medical information form), one can use a tool like pivot tables to facilitate the summary of data into manageable pieces, such as
 - i. Parents' contact information on a list rather than dozens of individual forms
 - ii. Swimmers with medical conditions (some of the participants have some intolerance to certain products, and others have severe allergies)
 - iii. Medication being taken by participants, medication in case of an allergic reaction.

- iv. Also create awareness for chaperones on specific medications that participants cannot take.
- v. Schedule plus specific pivot tables showing relevant information like room numbers.
- vi. Having the specific pivot tables printed out eliminates the need for carrying around the binder. The binder should stay back in the hotel at the chaperones' rooms.

Emergency Plan

- Go through the Chaperone Kit before leaving, resupplying the First Aid kit and other supplies as needed (e.g., feminine sanitary supplies, swim caps).
- Develop an Emergency Plan, including:
 - Location and ready access to the first aid kit,
 - Location and ready access to a telephone or other reliable means of communication (cell phones do not work in all areas)
 - Telephone number of ambulance and hospital
 - Provision of a suitable means of transportation in the event of an emergency
 - Supervision plans for emergency situations (who is second in command, who takes injured individuals to hospital, who reports the problems, etc.)
 - Know the facility's emergency protocol, and be prepared to do a head count at the muster point

General Information, Facts and Lessons Learned

- As a chaperone, ensure that you have a copy of the psych sheet. These can usually be printed from the Host Swim Club prior to the meet.
- Understand that there is a very good chance that you may not see large portions of the Event or meet. And it may mean that you could miss your own child's swimming in some Events, although the Lead Chaperone will do their best to schedule around this.
- Meals should be eaten as a group, whenever possible.
- Have the younger swimmers buddy up with an older swimmer.
- Be accessible to the swimmers. If they need you for something, they will need to know where to find you.
- When the group is large, it makes sense to mix the kids up so they're not only with the swimmers they are used to.

Insurance Information

NCSA is covered under the Swim Alberta Insurance Policy. See the Swim Alberta website, under the link "Insurance".

- According to the policy, a number of people are covered under Swim Alberta. Swimmers including associate and rookies (while "trying-out" - 2 week maximum), who are registered with Swim Alberta. Coaches, officials, chaperones, parent volunteers, general members, and auxiliary workers "acting in an official capacity", on behalf of a member club of Swim Alberta, are also covered. Note that the chaperones must be registered with Swim Alberta prior to the event (by the Head Coach).
- Participants are covered during Provincial training camps, sanctioned swim meets, practices and training sessions, under the supervision of proper authority of the member club. This includes travel directly to and from meets and practices, provided there are more than two families in the vehicle. Coverage is in effect as long as NCSA remains in good standing with Swim Alberta.