



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team LEHY Team Handbook

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## **I. MISSION STATEMENTS and LEHY COACHING PHILOSOPHY**

### **Mission Statement of the Greater Hartford YMCA**

The YMCA of Greater Hartford is an association, open to all and committed to helping people develop their God-given potential in spirit, mind and body. Our commitment is based on the belief that the purpose of this three-fold development is to live out the values of our Judeo-Christian heritage, including caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

### **Mission Statement of the Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team (LEHY)**

Using the YMCA Core Values of caring, respect, honesty and responsibility, the Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team is open to all level of youth competitive swimmers and committed to developing youth to reach his/her highest potential through the sport of swimming.

### **Philosophy of LEHY Coaching Staff**

Through the sport of swimming, the LEHY coaching staff is committed to teaching our swimmers lessons for life. We are devoted to creating a strong team atmosphere where swimmers discover how to win with modesty, support their teammates (and all competitors), and accept defeat with dignity. We work to help our swimmers develop a strong self-esteem, and encourage them to set goals and exceed expectations. We respect each swimmers individuality and acknowledge every swimmers' ability level. Finally we are looking to create a lifelong love for the sport of swimming while they are building a positive work ethic within a setting that is nurturing and fun.

## **II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW, PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF LEHY SWIMMING**

### **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team offers a full year competitive swim program.

Short Course Season- September to March/April

Long Course Season- April to August

Practice is held primarily at three facilities:

East Hartford Middle School

East Hartford High School

Terry Odessa Pool (50 meter outdoor facility- summer only)

**LEHY is committed to giving swimmers the opportunity to compete at the highest level possible. This includes but is not limited to CT State Championship meets, Regional YMCA and USA Swimming Championship meets, YMCA Nationals (SC and LC), USA Swimming Junior Nationals, USA Swimming US Opens, USA Swimming Senior Nationals, USA Swimming Olympic Trials.**

## **PURPOSE OF LEHY**

**In keeping with our East Hartford Branch YMCA goals of creating opportunities for skills, values and leadership development, LEHY provides a competitive swimming activity which offers each swimmer the opportunity, through training and competition, to develop stamina, to strive to swim their best and to reach their full potential. We define competition as being not who your opponents are or how good they are but striving to swim your best in any race.**

**\*LEHY is a competitive swim program. While we are committed to teaching and improving stroke technique, we are also preparing swimmers to participate in competition. LEHY is not an option for swimmers who are not looking to take part in swim meets.**

**\*Former LEHY participants who are swimming collegiately will be welcome back to train in the long course season.**

## **OBJECTIVES OF LEHY**

- 1. To organize the many tasks required to run a competitive swim program.**
- 2. To maintain a system that assures a high quality program which will seek to meet the stated purpose.**
- 3. To implement a system that assures continuity in the competitive swim program from year to year.**
- 4. To keep the technical functions of the coaches separate from the responsibilities of the parental volunteer role.**
- 5. To facilitate the communication as needed between and among parents, swimmers, coaches, the YMCA, the CT YMCA Swim League, CT Swimming, USA Swimming, and the owners of the swimming facilities.**
- 6. To offer a program which will continue to meet the need of all the different levels of swimming ability.**
- 7. To ensure and maintain a well trained, certified and educated coaching staff.**

8. To formalize methods to recruit and train parent volunteers for official and team meet management positions in order to operate the total swim team program.
9. To have a year round competitive program for the continued development of the swimmers.
10. To keep team goals and standards in conjunction with the YMCA Mission Statement.
11. For the YMCA program director to evaluate the coaching staff on an annual basis.
12. To keep a LEHY voluntary organization so that an affordable, quality, competitive swim program is available to the YMCA constituency.

### **III. LEHY TEAM STRUCTURE**

The ultimate authority in the Metropolitan Hartford YMCA is the voting membership and board of directors. The branches and staff receive their authority to operate by the powers entrusted to them by the board of directors. Every YMCA program operates within this organizational framework striving to meet the stated YMCA mission statement. Likewise the operation of LEHY is subject to the determination of the branch executive director.

**East Hartford YMCA Executive Director- Laura Floyd**

**East Hartford YMCA LEHY Program Director- Ed Steinnagel**

**East Hartford YMCA LEHY Program Supervisor- Laura Floyd**

- Secure pool time for practices and meets.
- Supervise and evaluate the coaching staff.
- Interview and hire new coaches/staff.
- Answer inquiries regarding program.
- Be available to meet with parents and/or staff to address concerns.
- Provide the East Hartford YMCA Board of Directors with information regarding the program.

**East Hartford YMCA LEHY Membership- Ken Johnson**

- All inquiries, paperwork, and monies involved with registering for the LEHY Swim Team.

#### **LEHY Coaching Staff**

**LEHY Head Coach/Head Age Group Coach- Edmund Steinnagel**

**LEHY Head Senior Coach- Kaeley Steinnagel**

**LEHY 8 and under Coach/Age Group Coach- Marcella MacDonald**

**LEHY Assistant Senior/Age Group Coaches- Chris Curtin, Jake Greene, Laura McLaughlin**

#### **LEHY Essential Parent Volunteer Positions**

- Parents in these volunteer positions will receive a vote for the Nikki "In Courage, In Spirit" Award if a vote is necessary.

**Meet Management Team- Joanne Bresnahan  
Meghan Wildstein  
Kate Kudlac  
Laura McLaughlin**

**LEHY Team Entry Chair- Wendy Jackwin**

**LEHY Treasurer- Carol Savidge**

**LEHY Ways and Means- Paul and Adele Hipsky/ Kristen and Kurt Paluska**

**LEHY Pool Representatives- Maria Pitchell**

#### **IV. Coaches Responsibilities**

- 1. Plan the swimmers training schedules and maintain continuous development of swimmers.**
- 2. Conduct all practice session to include stroke work, etc.**
- 3. Conduct tryouts for prospective swim team members to insure safety of participants in the water.**
- 4. Determine which swimmers shall be accepted as club members based upon the available swimmers and criteria established by the coach.**
- 5. Assign swimmers to practice session based upon coaches' judgment as to the swimmers ability and competitive needs.**
- 6. Accept full responsibility for the health and safety of all swimmers while participating in practice sessions and meets.**
- 7. Assign swimmers to the competitive events that the coach determines are in the best interest of the swimmer and the team.**
- 8. Attend swim meets.**
- 9. Attend or send a representative to all necessary YMCA Swim League or CT Swimming meetings and report pertinent information to the membership.**
- 10. Conduct whatever coaches meeting are needed to carry out coaching needs.**
- 11. Meet regularly with the program director to insure the team's and swimmers' needs are being met.**
- 12. Be available to discuss a swimmers progress with parents.**

#### **V. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND POSITIONS**

**LEHY Essential Parent Volunteer Positions**

**Without volunteers in these positions we are unable to run an effective program and maintain a high level swim program at a reasonable cost to the membership. Parents are encouraged to get involved with LEHY swimming through one of these positions.**

**Meet Management Team:**

- **Run and manage all LEHY Sponsored meets**
  - **Create and submit meet bid information to CT Swimming**
  - **Organize parent volunteer base for meets**
  - **Oversee meet while in progress**
  - **Collect all submitted entries from teams**
  - **Create meet and have meet compiled for the computer volunteers**
  - **Point of contact for team meet entry chairs**

**LEHY Meet Entry Chair:**

- **Create and maintain team database with current times**
- **Responsible for submitting entries for those meets designated by the coaching staff**
- **Fill out entries in accordance with the meet announcement instructions**
- **Make the necessary arrangements for the payment of the entry fees**
- **Submit all team USA Swimming Registrations to CT Swimming**
- **Complete all LEHY meet entries for competitions**

**LEHY Treasurer:**

- **Assist in assuring meet entries are turned in timely.**

**LEHY Ways and Means:**

- **Run concessions at all LEHY sponsored meets**
- **Work with the YMCA to purchase all necessary items for concessions**

**LEHY Pool Representatives:**

- **Point of contact for all families at respective pool**
- **Collection point person for apparel orders**
- **Maintain information posted on the boards at pool**

**LEHY Officials**

**In order for LEHY to sponsor USA Swimming meets, we must maintain certified officials on our team. These swim meets we sponsor are major monetary supports to our**

program, keeping the program fees for families down. This is an invaluable volunteer service taken on by our parents. Families who volunteer to officiate on a regular basis at swim meets help lower our work assignments and will not be considered for timing position at meets unless absolutely necessary. CT Swimming holds official certification class on a regular basis. We encourage parents to get involved in this capacity.

### **Timing at Swim Meets:**

At every USA and YMCA swimming competition, teams are responsible to provide timers. The number of timers is based on the number of swimmers a team has entered. Parents of any child entered in a meet must be ready and willing to help fulfill this requirement. Below is an explanation of LEHY parents' responsibilities for timing at meets.

### **Timing Process:**

Timing assignments will be assigned by coaches based upon the swimmers entered in a meet. There will be occasions where families will have the opportunity to pick which day they would like to time, but timing slots will be done by coaches based upon placement of events and swimmers entered in those events.

### **Family Responsibilities:**

- 1) Check **What's New** and the **Meet Information** sections of the LEHY webpage prior to going to a meet to verify family timing assignments (and/or any other work assignments).
  - This information will be posted as soon as it is available (sometimes this could be the day prior to the start of the meet). If the timing assignments come out very late they will be emailed to families.
  - Because you do not know that you have an assignment does not mean that you do not have to **DO YOUR ASSIGNMENT**. If you cannot fulfill your requirement it is your responsibility to find a replacement.
  - Please remember that if you have more than one child on the team, you may have more than one timing assignment.
  - If you are unsure about your timing assignment, check with other people at the meet until you find someone that knows what the assignments are.
    - Find the head timer if he/she is available.
- 2) Because many of the meet entries are done early in the season, there are times that a swimmer may need to scratch from a meet due to another obligation.



- Because the timing are done by meet entry, it is the families responsibility to contact Kaeley ([Kaeley9@comcast.net](mailto:Kaeley9@comcast.net)) to let her know if you are scratching. You can also write it on the final entry located on the board at the pools.
    - This practice will reduce the need to find a replacement for someone that is not at the meet on the day of the meet.
- 3) When our team is assigned two timing slots this means that we will need 8 timers for the session.
- Responsibilities for the first timing slot(s):
    - Pick up watches and sign in for "LEHY"
    - Get lane assignment
    - Attend timers meeting (usually fifteen minutes prior to start of meet)
      - Example: meet starts at 8:30 meeting usually will be around 8:15.
  - Responsibility of second timer(s)
    - Second timer(s) are to relieve first timer(s) one hour from the start of the timers meeting.
      - Example: using the prior example would be required first timer to be replaced at 9:15.
  - All other timers (third, fourth, etc) will replace the previous timer one hour from the start of their shift.

**NOTE:** Please remember the timing slot may not always be in one hour time increments and if we know that a meet will be shorter than the usual four hours, the timing slots may be adjusted to forty-five minutes. If the meet is longer, or we have a shortage of families the timing assignment may be a little longer.

- 4) If you are assigned a timing slot, you may trade amongst the other families assigned for the weekend. If your child needs to scratch the meet it is your responsibility to find a replacement. Meet entries can be found on our website.

### **Trials/Finals Meets (including championship) Timing Assignments:**

Timing assignment will be assigned as stated above, with the exception of Finals. When swimmers make finals at a Trials/Finals meet our timing assignment for the finals session is based on how many swimmers are swimming in THAT final session.

- If you have a swimmer who has made finals and is swimming you will be expected to time. No exceptions.

- It is only fair if you have a swimmer entered in one of the last events of the night at finals, that you have the last timing slot.

**NOTE:** Families who have a parent who officiates at a meet will not be asked to time unless absolutely necessary.

## **VI. LEHY TEAM SQUADS AND POOL ASSIGNMENTS**

Swimmers are assigned a squad and practice pool based on their ability to maintain certain practice expectations, attendance at practice, and performance at meets. The coaches are placing swimmers in practices groups in order to provide each swimmer the opportunity to have a challenging, but safe, practice environment.

### **LEHY SQUADS**

L, E, H, and Y Squads practice at East Hartford Middle School

Senior III squad may practice at East Hartford Middle School or East Hartford High School

Senior II, I and National Squads practice at East Hartford High School

#### **L Squad: The “Lightening” Squad**

Swimmers ages 8 and under. This squad introduces the swimmer to the sport of swimming in an enjoyable and comfortable environment. The swimmers learn the four competitive strokes, starts and turns through a multitude of drills and individual instruction. Swimmers in this squad participate in all YMCA dual and championship meets, along with specific USS 8 and under meets.

**Attendance:** L Squad practices two day a week therefore every attempt should be made to make ALL practices.

#### **E Squad**

Swimmers ages 9-12. This squad works on refining stroke mechanics of all the competitive strokes. Starts, turns and some endurance training (through interval sets) are also a component of this squad. The swimmers are expected to supplement their two practices with one additional practice with the H and Y squads. This allows the swimmers to be exposed to longer distances in practice and is an important step towards continued improvement. This squad participates in all YMCA dual and championship meets, USS qualifiers (at the coach’s discretion), and any USS championship in which they qualify.

**Attendance:** E Squad has 2 practices weekly along with a third day with the H and Y squads. Swimmers should make every attempt to attend all practices.

## **H Squad**

Swimmers ages 9 and over. Swimmers in this squad are expected to begin making a commitment to the sport of swimming. There is an emphasis on longer distance training while continuing to have a focus on the stroke mechanics of the competitive strokes, starts and turns. Swimmers will be completing full practices on interval sets and will be grouped by ability to hold the sets. Swimmers in this squad compete in all YMCA dual and championship meets, USS qualifiers, and any USS championship in which they qualify.

**Attendance:** H Squad is offered 5 practices weekly (3 one hour practice and 2 two hour practices). Swimmers are expected to make every attempt to attend a minimum of 3 practices a week. 11 and overs in this squad should make one of the three practices a two hour practice.

## **YSquad:**

Swimmers ages 10 and over. Swimmers in this squad are expected to have made a commitment to the sport of swimming. There is an emphasis on longer distance training, and the introduction of "challenge" sets where swimmers are expected to independently motivate themselves. Swimmers continue to focus on the basic mechanics of swimming while learning to be more independent in the sport. Swimmers in this squad compete in all YMCA dual and championship meets, USS qualifiers, and any USS championship in which they qualify.

**Attendance:** Y Squad is offered 5 practices weekly (3 one hour practice and 2 two hour practices). Swimmers are expected to make every attempt to make a minimum of 3 practices a week (one of which must be a two hour practice). Any swimmer who is 13 or older in this squad is encouraged to swim a fourth practice weekly.

## **Senior III:**

Swimmers 13 and older. The Senior III squad is the first of the four senior training groups. Swimmers in this squad have made the commitment to the sport of swimming. The emphasis on distance training continues to increase in intensity, and these swimmers are expected to continue to take steps towards independent motivation. They begin to work on advanced stroke technique, specialty training, and race strategy. In order to be considered to move to one of the other senior groups a commitment to train long course in the spring/summer months is necessary.

**Attendance:** Senior III swimmers are offered 5 practices (all one and a half hours) a week. These swimmers should be attending 70% of the scheduled practices per month.

## **Senior II:**

Swimmers 13 and older. The Senior II squad swimmers have made the commitment to the sport of swimming and are dedicated to improve their endurance by working towards swimming 4 days a week of practice and completing independent dryland workouts. Advanced stroke technique, specialty training, and race strategy become very important for continued improvement. In order to be considered to move to one of

the other senior groups a commitment to train long course in the spring/summer months is mandatory.

**Attendance:** Senior II swimmers are offered 5 practices (all one and a half hours) a week. These swimmers should attend 75% of the scheduled practices per month. They will also be offered Saturday practices, when available.

#### **Senior I:**

Swimmers 13 and older who have achieved CT Senior Open cuts and/or LC YMCA National cuts. Attaining these standards does not guarantee a spot on the Senior I group. Swimmers are encouraged to complete outside dryland training on a regular basis. Those chosen to train in the Senior I group must train at a high level daily. Practices are challenging and a swimmer must be self motivated to remain in this squad. This group is reserved for swimmers who have made a year-round commitment to swimming and training for the next level.

**Attendance:** Senior I swimmers are offered 5 practices a week and Saturday practices, when available. These swimmers should attend 75 % of scheduled practices per month, but are encourage to do more.

#### **National:**

Swimmers who have achieved SC YMCA National cuts and/or a full compliment of LC YMCA National cuts. Attaining these requirements does not guarantee a spot on the National squad. Swimmers are expected to complete 3 days of dry land training independently outside the scheduled in water practice times. Because of the expectations of training and attendance, it is suggested that swimmers are not placed in this group too early. Swimmers need to be sure they are ready to totally commit to swimming and to continue to train at a high level.

**Attendance:** National squad swimmers are offered 5 practices a week and Saturday practices, when available. Swimmers in this squad should attend more than 80% of the practices but are required to attend a minimum of 80% on a monthly basis. Saturday practices are strongly recommended.

## **VII. YMCA and USA SWIMMING MEET PARTICIPATION**

LEHY Swimming is committed to providing swimmers of all ages and abilities opportunities to compete in swim meets throughout the season.

We are a YMCA program and therefore YMCA meets are a primary focus. Swimmers are expected to attend all YMCA dual meets and any YMCA Championships in which the team participates. We are dedicated to supporting our swimmers to the highest level of YMCA Swimming competition (YMCA National Championships- SC and LC).

We are also a member of USA Swimming and will have ample opportunities for swimmers to compete in USA Swimming sanctioned meets and championships throughout the season.

#### **Short Course Season**

- Meet entry sign-ups will be located at both pools. Families are expected to sign swimmers up at the pool by the written entry deadline. All meet entries will be posted for a minimum of 5 practices. In the case that an entry must be done in a shorter amount of time an email will be sent to all members. If a swimmer is not signed up for a meet they will not be entered.

#### **Long Course Season**

- All meets with the exception of championships, will be sign-up for with a YES/NO Meet Sign-Up Form provided by the coaches. There will be a deadline on the form. Any form received after the deadline cannot be guaranteed entry into any meet.

#### **LEHY MEET FEE POLICY**

##### **Entry Fee Policy**

Families are responsible for all meet entry fees. Signing up for a meet signifies you acknowledge you will pay the entry fees for your swimmer(s). There will not be entry escrow accounts. Families will be sent an invoice after the entries are completed. The invoice will have a due date. Entry fees not paid by the due date may result in suspension for participating in additional meets until the fees are paid. Championship entry fees will be due after the entries are complete.

Swimmers will continue to be signed up as stated above. Swimmers will not be allowed to compete in Championships if entry fees for the season are not paid.

#### **VIII. SWIMMER'S CODE OF CONDUCT\*\***

The Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team (LEHY) abides by a strict Code of Conduct governing all coaches, swimmers, and parents. The purpose of the Code is to ensure that all those associated with East Hartford YMCA swimming treat others with dignity and respect.

The Code of Conduct is a condition of membership for all swimmers, parents and coaches. All members of the LEHY Swim Team and their parents agree to abide by the Code of Conduct and agree to be subjected to the consequences of violating the Code.

**All enforcement decisions made by the East Hartford YMCA are final and are not subject to review. No refunds will be granted to those swimmers dismissed from the team for their or their parents' violation of the Code of Conduct.**

### **Roles And Responsibilities:**

#### **Swimmers-**

- 1. Respect your teammates, coaches, officials and opponents at all times.**
- 2. Give 100% effort at each practice and meet.**
- 3. Support and encourage your teammates.**
- 4. Set a positive example.**
- 5. Display good sportsmanship at all times both on and off the pool deck.**
- 6. Don't be afraid to make a mistake; that's part of learning.**
- 7. Listen to and learn from your coaches.**
- 8. Be modest in victory and gracious in defeat.**
- 9. Have fun!**

#### **All-**

- 1. Any conduct, including abusive language and/or gestures, racially insensitive remarks, damage to property or belongings, or any other conduct that reflects poorly on you, the East Hartford YMCA, and/or the LEHY Swim Team is deemed to be unacceptable and will not be tolerated. This rule applies to all swimmers, parents, siblings and guests at all times when at meets and/or practices, on the pool deck, in the locker rooms or any other associated facilities.**
- 2. You represent LEHY and the East Hartford YMCA during any meet or practice, home or away. Any conduct such as shoplifting, destruction of property, illegal consumption of drugs or alcohol, or any other questionable activity will not be tolerated. This rule applies for the entire duration of such meet or practice.**
- 3. The LEHY coaching staff and the Executive Director of the East Hartford YMCA will deal with unacceptable conduct at their sole discretion, imposing warnings, suspension or expulsion, as they deem appropriate. ANY SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FROM THE TEAM BASED ON VIOLATIONS OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT WILL NOT BE ACCOMPANIED BY ANY REFUNDS.**

**\*\*Adapted from the Darien Piranha YMCA Swim Team**

**[http://www.darien-ymca.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=179&Itemid=188](http://www.darien-ymca.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=179&Itemid=188)**

## **IX. Parent Code of Ethics\***

The YMCA is concerned with the development of the mind, body and spirit. Within the philosophy of "Keeping a Good Kid Good" we believe that competitive athletics can have a tremendous influence on helping youngsters with the difficult decisions in life and with maintaining a positive direction away from the negative influences of drugs, alcohol, crime, academic failures, drifting, cults, teen suicide, etc...

The following "Code of Ethics" is offered as a guide to insure the promotion of good sportsmanship and conduct among the PARENTS of the Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team community.

**A parent must:**

- 1. Conduct himself/herself in a manner to earn the respect and confidence of the athletes, coaches, officials and YMCA Professional Staff.**
- 2. Conduct himself/herself in a manner that will ensure the rights and welfare of the athletes with whom he/she comes in contact with.**
- 3. Always practice good sportsmanship.**
- 4. Offer congratulations to the opponent team win or lose.**
- 5. Be a goodwill ambassador between his/her team and the public.**
- 6. Be aware of the ethical, social responsibility and influence that he/she has on the lives of the athletes as a role model for them to emulate.**
- 7. Maintain high ideals and firm principles of right and wrong.**
- 8. Encourage the moral, spiritual, physical and intellectual life of the athletes.**
- 9. Support such virtues as hard work, honesty, values and sportsmanship with the athletes.**
- 10. Treat every athlete fairly, justly, impartially, intelligently and with sensitivity.**
- 11. Parents should not recruit athletes from other teams located outside their respective YMCA service area within any calendar year.**
- 12. When contacted by another parent who is considering switching teams, the parent should proceed with care and sensitivity.**
- 13. Promote the many benefits of competition at all levels and attract athletes to your respective program in an ethical and positive manner with respect to the individual YMCA's service area and league philosophy on recruiting.**
- 14. Maintain high integrity and respect for the rights and efforts of team coaches.**
- 15. Understand that coaching decisions are for the best interest of the team and athlete and should therefore be supported.**
- 16. Keep the child's best interest at heart as a priority and don't exert undo pressure on the child to promote your own personal goals and desires.**
- 17. Maintain a balanced perspective on the purpose and values YMCA competition is trying to promote, not who has the best win/lose record or a win at any cost attitude.**
- 18. Never provide or recommend drugs to athletes as a means of improving athletic performance.**

19. Never use alcohol or other recreational drugs in the direct presence of athletes nor be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when involved with athletic events, parent conferences or planning meetings.
20. Understand that individual YMCA competitive philosophies differ therefore parents should not concern themselves with competing programs and should focus their time and energy on their own program.

#### **PROMOTING YOUR TEAM:**

Public statements, advertising and promotional activities should serve the purpose of enlightening the public about the benefit of YMCA competitive sports and help the public to make informed decisions about programs. Statements should not be presented in a manner which creates false or unjustifiable expectations and should not contain comparisons to other programs that cast doubt about the competing programs.

#### **Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP)**

All parents must agree to in writing to the MAAPP Policy set forth by USA Swimming. Not agreeing to the policy may result in a family being asked to leave the team.

\*Adapted from Parent Code of Ethics at [www.njymcaswim.org](http://www.njymcaswim.org)

## **X. LEHY Bullying Policy**

LEHY will follow the bullying policy as set forth by USA Swimming.

### **Action Plan of the Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team to Address Bullying**

#### **PURPOSE**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team (LEHY) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. LEHY is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or athlete/mentor.

#### **Objectives of the LEHY's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:**

1. To make it clear that LEHY will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that LEHY takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and



parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

### **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other 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:

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

### **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents;
- Talk to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to the Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

### **HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING**

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.

4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

#### **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED**

1. First, we get the facts.

- a. Keep all the involved children separate.
- b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
- c. Listen without blaming.
- d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
- e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.

2. Then, we determine if it's bullying. There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

- a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
- b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:

- What is the history between the kids involved?
- Have there been past conflicts?
- Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
- Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?

c. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.

d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

#### **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED**

3. Support the kids who are being bullied

a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.

b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:

i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember

that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.

ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.

c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

#### **4. Address bullying behavior**

a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.

b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.

c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:

i. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.

ii. Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.

d. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:

i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.

ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.

iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.

e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:

i. Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.

ii. Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.

f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

**5. Support bystanders who witness bullying.** Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.

a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;

- b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
- c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. “Let’s go, practice is about to start.”
- d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
- e. Don’t give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

## **XI. LEHY Policy on Electronic Communication**

LEHY will follow the electronic communication policy as set forth by USA Swimming

### **Electronic Communication Policy of the Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Laurel East Hartford YMCA Swim Team (LEHY) recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While LEHY acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, LEHY also realizes that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults use these methods to communicate with minors.

#### **GENERAL CONTENT**

All communications between a coach or other adult and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection.

For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drugs or alcohol use;
- sexually oriented conversation; sexually explicit language; sexual activity
- the adult’s personal life , social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems; and
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures
- Note: Any communication concerning an athlete’s personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, board member or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: “Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?” or “Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient’s parents, the coaching staff, the

board, or other athletes?”

With respect to electronic communications, a simple test that can be used in most cases is whether the electronic communication with swimmers is Transparent, Accessible and Professional.

**Transparent:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.

**Accessible:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the Club’s records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.

**Professional:** All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria, then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

#### **FACEBOOK, BLOGS, AND SIMILAR SITES**

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a “friend.” A coach should not accept any “friend” request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “private message” each other through Facebook. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “instant message” each other through Facebook chat or other IM method.

The Club has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can “friend” for information and updates on team-related matters.

Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to “private” to prevent athletes from accessing the coach’s personal information.

#### **TWITTER**

**Best Practice:** The Club has an official Twitter page that coaches, athletes and parents can follow for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches are not permitted to follow athletes on Twitter. Likewise, athletes are not permitted to follow coaches on Twitter. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each

other through Twitter.

**Alternative Option: Coaches and athletes may follow each other on Twitter. Coaches cannot retweet an athlete message post. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to “direct message” each other through Twitter.**

#### **TEXTING**

**Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting is allowed between coaches and athletes during the hours from 7am until 9pm (unless otherwise necessary). Texting only shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.**

#### **EMAIL**

**Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate between the hours of 7am and 9pm (unless otherwise necessary). When communicating with an athlete through email, a parent, another coach, or a board member must also be copied.**

#### **REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE ALL ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

**The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.**

### **XIII. Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP)**

**On April 29, 2019 all USA Swimming Clubs were contacted by USA Swimming with additional policies that must be in place for ALL adults (members and non-members) who are in contact with minor athletes (under the age of 18).**

#### **THIS POLICY APPLIES TO:**

- All USA Swimming non-athlete members and adult athlete members;**
- Participating non-members (e.g., meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.);**
- LSC and club adult staff and board members; and**
- Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes. Collectively “Applicable Adult(s)”**

#### **GENERAL REQUIREMENT**

**USA Swimming member clubs and LSCs are required to implement this Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy in full. The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy must be**

reviewed and agreed to in writing by all athletes, parents, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs on an annual basis with such written agreement to be retained by the club.

## **ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS**

### **I. Observable and Interruptible**

**One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) must occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult unless meeting with a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider (see below) or under emergency circumstances.**

### **II. Meetings**

- a. Meetings between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult may only occur if another adult is present and where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult, except under emergency circumstances.**
- b. If a one-on-one meeting takes place, the door to the room must remain unlocked and open. If available, it must occur in a room that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.**
- c. Meetings must not be conducted in an Applicable Adult or athlete's hotel room or other overnight lodging location during team travel.**

### **III. Meetings with Mental Health Care Professionals and/or Health Care Providers**

**If a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider meet with a minor athlete in conjunction with participation, including at practice or competition sites, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that:**

- a. The door remains unlocked;**
- b. Another adult is present at the facility;**
- c. The other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring; and**
- d. Written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the Mental Health Care Professional and/or HealthCare Provider, with a copy provided to the club.**

### **III. Individual Training Sessions[Recommended]**

**Individual training sessions outside of the regular course of training and practice between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the training session.**

## **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

### **I. Content**

All electronic communication from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.

### **II. Open and Transparent**

Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), the minor athlete's legal guardian must be copied. If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult must copy the minor athlete's legal guardian on any electronic communication response to the minor athlete. When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult must copy another adult.

### **III. Requests to Discontinue**

Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by the club, LSC or by an Applicable Adult subject to this Policy. The organization must abide by any such request that the minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, or included in any social media post, absent emergency circumstances.

### **IV. Hours**

Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., unless emergency circumstances exist, or during competition travel.

### **V. Prohibited Electronic Communication**

Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes and such Applicable Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from minor athletes, unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact as opposed to regular contact. Existing social media connections with minor athletes must be discontinued. Minor athletes may "friend" the club and/or LSC's official page. Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes must not send private, instant or direct messages to a minor athlete through social media platforms.



## **TRAVEL**

### **I. Local Travel**

**Local travel consists of travel to training, practice and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).**

**Applicable Adults must not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances, and must always have at least two minor athletes or another adult in the vehicle, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's legal guardian.**

**[Recommended] Legal guardians must pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.**

### **II. Team Travel**

**Team travel is travel to a competition or other team activity that the organization plans and supervises.**

- a. During team travel, when doing room checks two-deep leadership (two Applicable Adults should be present) and observable and interruptible environments must be maintained.**

**When only one Applicable Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete's legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each competition for the minor athlete to travel alone with said Applicable Adult.**

**Team Managers and Chaperones who travel with the club or LSC must be USA Swimming members in good standing.**

- b. Unrelated non-athlete Applicable Adults must not share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with an athlete.**

**Minor athletes should be paired to share hotel rooms or other sleeping arrangements with other minor athletes of the same gender and of similar age. When a minor athlete and an adult athlete share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement, the minor athlete's legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each instance for the minor to share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with said adult athlete.**

- c. Meetings during team travel must be conducted consistent with the One-on-One Interactions section of this Policy (i.e., any such meeting must be**

observable and interruptible). Meetings must not be conducted in an individual's hotel room or other overnight sleeping location.

## **LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS**

### **I. Requirement to Use Locker Room or Changing Area**

The designated locker room or changing area must be used when an athlete or Applicable Adult changes, in whole or in part, into or out of a swimsuit when wearing just one suit (e.g., deck changing is prohibited).

### **II. Use of Recording Devices**

Use of any device's (including a cell phone's) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces by a minor athlete or an Applicable Adult is prohibited.

### **III. Undress**

An unrelated Applicable Adult must not expose his or her breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to a minor athlete under any circumstance. An unrelated Applicable Adult must not request an unrelated minor athlete to expose the minor athlete's breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to the unrelated Applicable Adult under any circumstance.

### **IV. One-on-One Interactions**

Except for athletes on the same team or athletes attending the same competition, at no time are unrelated Applicable Adults permitted to be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area, except under emergency circumstances. If the organization is using a facility that only has a single locker room or changing area, separate times for use by Applicable Adults must be designated.

### **V. Monitoring**

The club must regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms and changing areas to ensure compliance with this Policy. Locker rooms and changing areas may be monitored by use of the following methods:

- a. Conducting a sweep of the locker room or changing area before athletes arrive;
- b. Posting staff directly outside the locker room or changing area during periods of use;
- c. Leaving the doors open when adequate privacy is still possible; and/or

- d. Making occasional sweeps of the locker rooms or changing areas with women checking on female locker rooms and men checking on male locker rooms. Every effort must be made to recognize when a minor athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition, and, if the minor athlete does not return in a timely fashion, to check on the minor athlete's whereabouts.

#### **VI. Legal Guardians in Locker Rooms or Changing Areas**

Legal guardians are discouraged from entering locker rooms and changing areas. If a legal guardian does enter a locker room or changing area, it must only be a same-sex legal guardian and the legal guardian should notify a coach or administrator in advance.

### **MESSAGES AND RUBDOWNS/ATHLETE TRAINING MODALITIES**

- I. **Definition:** In this section, the term "Massage" refers to any massage, rubdown, athletic training modality including physical modalities (e.g., stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, etc.) and electronic or instrument assisted modalities (e.g., stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.).
- II. **General Requirement**

Any Massage performed on an athlete must be conducted in an open and interruptible location and must be performed by a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional. However, even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach must not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstance.
- III. **Additional Minor Athlete Requirements**
  - a. Written consent by a legal guardian must be obtained in advance by the licensed massage therapist or other certified professional, with a copy provided to the club.
  - b. Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the Massage.
  - c. Any Massage of a minor athlete must be done with at least one other adult present and must never be done with only the minor athlete and the person performing the Massage in the room.
  - d. [Recommended] Any Massage of a minor athlete must only occur after a proper diagnosis from a treating physician and be done in the course of care according to the physician's treatment plan

Per USA Swimming ALL adults and athletes 18 and over must sign that they agree to the above policy on or before June 23, 2019. In addition, all registered athletes 18 and

**over and registered non-athletes of USA Swimming must take the Athlete Protection Training provided through USA Swimming (free training). Failure to comply may result in removal from USA Swimming programs.**

**Per USA Swimming Safe Sport, refusal to agree to the policy may result in dismissal from LEHY (a USA Swimming registered program).**