

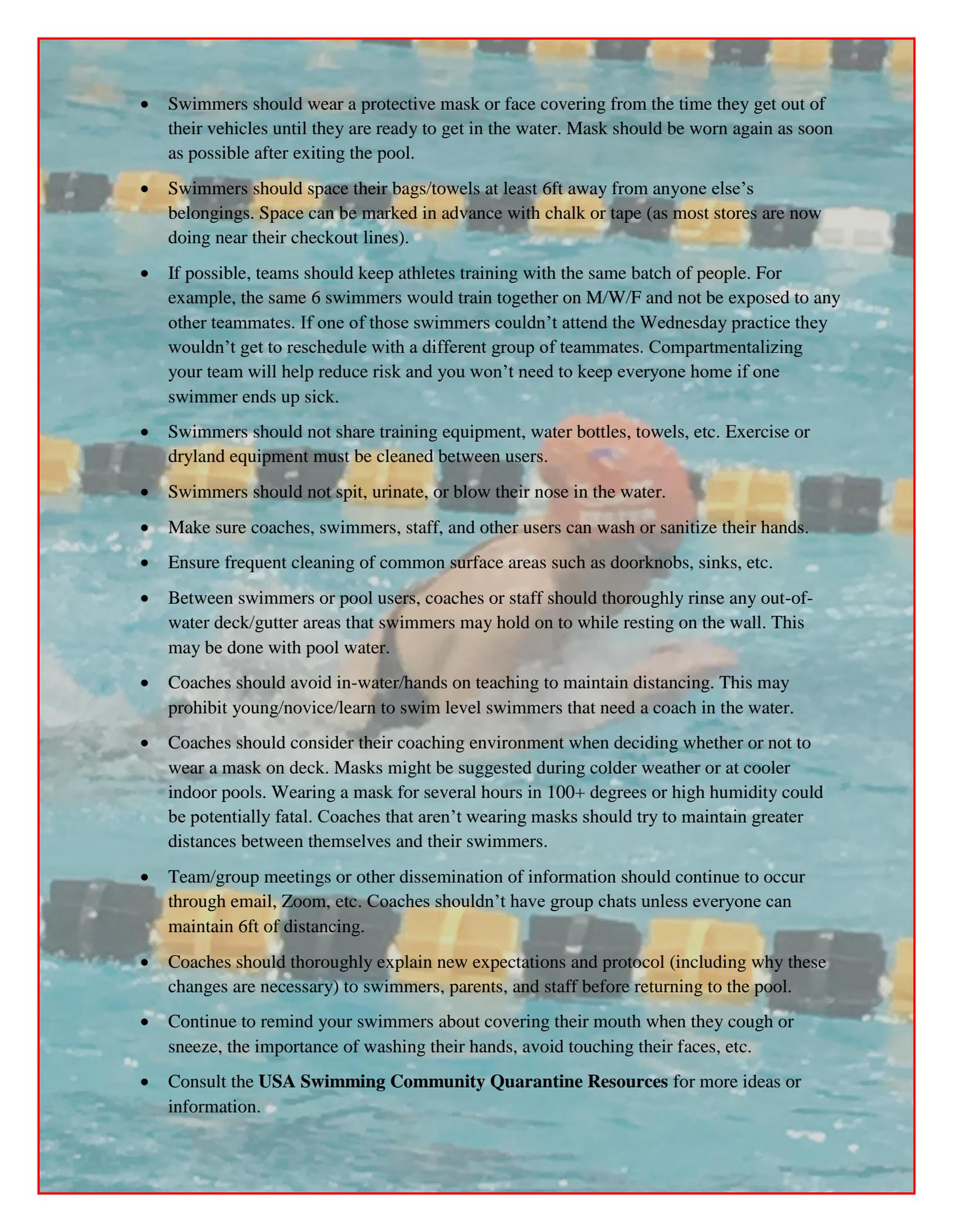
Social Distancing for Swim Teams

4 May, 2020

As some teams prepare to return to their pools, social distancing protocols should be in place to ensure the safety of our swimmers, pool users, and communities. Creating a safe environment may reduce the normal number of swimmers per lane or on deck. This could lead to a decrease in the amount of pool time available to swimmers. It's also possible that younger, less experienced, or at risk swimmers might not be able to swim at all. These sacrifices are temporary, and are necessary to prevent the further spread of COVID-19. Failure to follow these guidelines puts everyone at risk.

Remember that SOME swimming is better than NO swimming!

- Teams/facilities must allow all swimmers to have at least 6ft of space for safe social distancing while on deck and/or while resting in the water. This may require limits to the number of swimmers per lane. Check the **USA Swimming Social Distancing Practice Layout** for ideas on how to safely and effectively space your swimmers.
- At-risk swimmers, such as the elderly or immunocompromised, should not return to the pool until the situation is safe.
- Any sick swimmers, coaches, or parent volunteers are required to stay home. No exceptions! If anyone at your house gets sick, assume you may be contagious and stay home.
- The pool deck should remain closed to parents, spectators, or siblings. Make sure that young/new swimmers know where to go and what to do without being accompanied by a parent.
- Showers, locker rooms, play areas, team rooms, or other areas where people tend to congregate should remain closed. Swimmers should arrive in their suits and only go to the bathroom if necessary.
- Where applicable, prop open gates or doors to minimize people touching doorknobs or handles.
- Create signs for 'one way traffic' in busier areas or near entrances or exits (similar to isles in some stores). If necessary, require swimmers or pool users to travel the same direction while walking on deck (everyone moves clockwise or counterclockwise around the pool deck).
- Swimmers should be dropped off or picked up in a timely manner to minimize extra time waiting at the facility. Swimmers should stay at least 6ft away from anyone else while waiting to be picked up. Parents should wait in the car when picking up their swimmers.

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- A swimmer is visible in the background of the page, swimming in a pool. The water is blue, and there are yellow and black lane lines. The swimmer is wearing a red cap and is in a swimming stroke. The background is slightly out of focus.
- Swimmers should wear a protective mask or face covering from the time they get out of their vehicles until they are ready to get in the water. Mask should be worn again as soon as possible after exiting the pool.
 - Swimmers should space their bags/towels at least 6ft away from anyone else's belongings. Space can be marked in advance with chalk or tape (as most stores are now doing near their checkout lines).
 - If possible, teams should keep athletes training with the same batch of people. For example, the same 6 swimmers would train together on M/W/F and not be exposed to any other teammates. If one of those swimmers couldn't attend the Wednesday practice they wouldn't get to reschedule with a different group of teammates. Compartmentalizing your team will help reduce risk and you won't need to keep everyone home if one swimmer ends up sick.
 - Swimmers should not share training equipment, water bottles, towels, etc. Exercise or dryland equipment must be cleaned between users.
 - Swimmers should not spit, urinate, or blow their nose in the water.
 - Make sure coaches, swimmers, staff, and other users can wash or sanitize their hands.
 - Ensure frequent cleaning of common surface areas such as doorknobs, sinks, etc.
 - Between swimmers or pool users, coaches or staff should thoroughly rinse any out-of-water deck/gutter areas that swimmers may hold on to while resting on the wall. This may be done with pool water.
 - Coaches should avoid in-water/hands on teaching to maintain distancing. This may prohibit young/novice/learn to swim level swimmers that need a coach in the water.
 - Coaches should consider their coaching environment when deciding whether or not to wear a mask on deck. Masks might be suggested during colder weather or at cooler indoor pools. Wearing a mask for several hours in 100+ degrees or high humidity could be potentially fatal. Coaches that aren't wearing masks should try to maintain greater distances between themselves and their swimmers.
 - Team/group meetings or other dissemination of information should continue to occur through email, Zoom, etc. Coaches shouldn't have group chats unless everyone can maintain 6ft of distancing.
 - Coaches should thoroughly explain new expectations and protocol (including why these changes are necessary) to swimmers, parents, and staff before returning to the pool.
 - Continue to remind your swimmers about covering their mouth when they cough or sneeze, the importance of washing their hands, avoid touching their faces, etc.
 - Consult the **USA Swimming Community Quarantine Resources** for more ideas or information.