

## 2022-2024 SENIOR NATIONAL TEAM - ATHLETE HANDBOOK

### Rules and General Policies

The following General Rules and Policies apply anytime the Senior National Training Squad is together, at home training, travelling for a camp or competitions or for an event.

When travelling to a Pan American Games and Olympic Games, a USA Artistic Swimming (USAAS) /USOPC athlete is also subject to the USOPC Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedures.

While these policies may not cover every conceivable situation, we have compiled general guidelines that each athlete should follow. In addition, there is one guiding principle that must always be observed: athletes are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that will reflect positively upon them, their teammates, USAAS, the USOPC and the United States of America.

Athletes failing to follow USAAS's Rules and General Policies, may be disciplined by the High Performance Manager, the Senior Head Coach and/or Team Manager, and USOPC staff if the athlete is part of a USOPC team. Violations could result in a suspension or dismissal from the program or event. Athletes may have additional rights defined by the Ted Stevens Amateur Sports Act and the USOPC Bylaws.

#### **A. Travel**

1. You must bring your valid passport with you on all trips, unless recommended otherwise. At all international games, your passport must be presented as proof of citizenship and age. Athletes will not be permitted to compete without it.
2. Please return a photocopy of the picture page of your passport along with other requested information. It is vital that this information is always on file with USAAS. (If you do not currently hold a valid passport, please begin the application process immediately by contacting either your local passport agency or post office). Certain countries require that we obtain a Visa which will be stamped in your passport. The cost of obtaining a passport is the responsibility of each athlete.
3. Upon request, be prepared to send or give us your passport. This will allow USAAS to obtain Visas for the entire delegation at one time. If you are already in possession of a passport, be sure to check the expiration date. Please note that some countries do not allow entry if your passport expires within six (6) months of a trip. It is imperative that you keep your passport updated!  
Note: You may obtain a passport application at your nearest major post office or nearest government agency. For the location nearest you, please refer to their website at <http://travel.state.gov/passportservices.html>.
4. Realize ample administrative time is needed to arrange all airline reservations, visa applications and hotel accommodations. Procrastination may result in unneeded schedule delays and **possible roster changes**.
5. After the arrangements have been made, your ticket along with pertinent trip information will be emailed to you. It is your responsibility to make sure you understand your travel arrangements.

6. You are expected to be on time for your flight. If you miss the plane, experience a delay or are re-routed, you must notify your National Team Manager and you will be expected to make the next scheduled flight. If you miss the flight for personal reasons, you will be responsible for the difference in airfare cost if applicable.
7. You must be on the chartered transportation to and from the airports, hotels, training fields and competition venues. No one is excused from the team transportation unless permission is given by the High Performance Manager or Team Manager in writing.
8. At competitions athletes are not allowed to travel on their own or with friends without prior authorization of the High Performance Manager and Team Manager.
9. If you should desire to make arrangements to have your city, time or date different than your scheduled travel arrangements, you must have permission from the High Performance Manager/Coaches well in advance. You will be charged the difference over and above the normal roundtrip fare.

### **B. Training Camp/Hotel & Dormitory Rules**

1. Prior to your departure, you will be supplied with the address(es) and telephone number(s) for the team's accommodations. You will also receive a memo prior to departure providing detailed information regarding your travel, flight, accommodation, ground transportation and other important information.
2. USAAS has a policy that athletes' families and friends do not travel with or stay in the same hotel as the official delegation. Past experience has shown that this policy, while appearing somewhat restrictive, is vital to the trip's efficiency - both on and off the field - and will contribute to the success of the National Squad.
3. You are a guest of the hotel or other organization providing accommodations. You must always maintain a cooperative relationship and conduct yourself in an exemplary manner.
4. You are also responsible for the conduct and care of your room. If your teammates are in your room being loud, it is your responsibility to quiet them. If an item is broken, missing, or stolen from your room, you are responsible and will have to pay for it.
5. Squad members will eat all meals together and at the prescribed time unless directed otherwise by the Coaches and Team Manager. It is mandatory that you attend every scheduled meal.
6. All incidental room expenses (phone, room service, movies, etc.) will be paid by the athlete prior to checking out from the hotel or facility. Athlete should clear incidental expenses the night prior to departure whenever possible.
7. Curfew for all athletes will be determined and set by the Coaches. At the assigned curfew you must be in your own room and in bed. Ample rest is crucial for your best performance.
8. Make all telephone calls before curfew. No phone calls or Skype/Facetime sessions will be permitted during the night. In the event of inappropriate communications, the Coaches and/or Team Manager will be collecting phones at curfew time every day and will return them to the athletes in the morning. This may also apply during training sessions at the competition.
9. Show respect for your roommate and other guests of the hotel - no loud radios, TV's or musical instruments will be permitted. If you want to have a private time or phone conversation, do it outside your room and prior to curfew.

10. No guests are permitted in your room unless permission is granted by the Coaches and/or Team Manager.

11. If you are going to be out of your room make sure the Coaches and/or Team Manager knows where you will be and for how long.

12. USAAS will provide for your transportation, meals and lodging during competitions. If you would like to participate to excursions or buy souvenirs, you must bring spending money.

Also note, that Team Managers do not loan USAAS money for personal expenses and excursions during camps and competitions. Under no circumstances will USAAS give personal loans to athletes. You should make arrangements to have sufficient spending money to take care of your personal needs while on the road. If your personal needs differ from the rest of the group (drinks, meals, and snacks), then you will be responsible for these needs.

### **C. Dress, Appearance and Behavior**

1. Use good judgment when appearing in public. Always be neat and presentable. You are accountable for what you say and do in public.

2. Your conduct in business establishments is always noticed; do not disgrace yourself and/or your teammates by acting in an appropriate manner.

3. It is your responsibility to be on time for all practices, meetings, and other appointments. Excuses will not be accepted.

4. It is expected of all athletes to be courteous with Coaches, Team Manager, other Athletes, Volunteers and Officials. Athletes must say 'Good Morning', 'Thank you' and greet other people appropriately when needed.

5. Athletes must wear Team Outfitting as instructed by the Coaches and/or Team Manager.

6. Athletes must not wear USAAS National Team outfitting off the field, unless permitted to do so by the Coaches and/or Team Manager. You are not allowed to trade or switch your outfitting unless otherwise allowed by the Coaches and/or Team Manager.

7. Special outfits may be required to be worn for selected appearances/events.

8. Athletes must conform to the athletic look when attending Competitions and Training Camps. It is part of the image of the Team to look fit, athletic, and professional.

9. Athletes must follow the rules and policies of the competition they are competing in. This includes, but is not limited to IOC, FINA, PASO and UANA.

### **D. Equipment Rules**

1. You are responsible for ensuring that you have the proper equipment for your training.

2. Any equipment problems must be reported immediately to the Team Manager.

3. Athletes are required to carry a small medical kit with them when travelling to camps and competitions. This kit should contain band aid, earplug, sleeping mask, Ibuprofen, Tylenol, mosquito repellent, etc., as recommended by the Team Physician.

4. Athletes will be given their competition suits by the Team Manager. All Athletes must rinse all suits and head pieces after use. Pins must be removed from the Head Pieces. Suits and Head Pieces must be returned dry, in the same state as when it was given to the athletes – in a plastic bag with name or on a hanger.

5. If a suit and/or head piece is lost or damaged, the athlete will have to pay for the replacement or repair of the suit. Cost will depend on each suit and head piece.

6. All suits, head pieces and other competition equipment cannot be checked in. It must be carried on the plane during travel, including domestic travel.

### **E. Training Room/Injuries**

1. All athletes must complete a Medical Questionnaire Form and a check-up annually with the Team Physician if they are training at the National Training Center. This information is confidential and is kept on file for the season with each athlete's personal records.
2. You must keep the Team Physician and Coaches informed and updated regarding injury, illness, hospitalization, medical condition. For the National Training Center athletes, the Team Physician must know all medication that you are taking at all times. You can communicate these by emails or phone. Any athlete who does not report an injury, disregards the physician/trainer's advice, or does not keep a doctor's appointment is subject to disciplinary action.
3. While training at the National Training Center, athletes may continue to see their family doctors but will be responsible to keep the Team Physician informed of all injury, illness, hospitalization, medical condition. The Team Physician is the lead person for athlete's rehabilitation treatment following an injury, illness, hospitalization, medical condition.
4. Whenever possible, an athletic trainer (and/or a doctor) will travel with the team.
5. We require that you use your own insurance as the primary coverage in the event of an injury or illness. USAAS's insurance is used only as primary insurance in the case of an accident or injury which happened at practice, at a competition or during an official event.
6. All athletes are expected to arrive at camp or resume the season healthy and fully fit. Any sub-standard situation will be penalized, and may include fine, suspension or a dismissal from camp.
7. If you are already suffering from an injury or you are not 100% fit when called into camp, you must immediately notify the Coaches and Team Manager.
8. When a training room is available, it is only for taping, first aid and the treatment of injuries. It is an important working area and is not to be used as a lounge. Absolutely no horseplay will be tolerated.
9. Treatments will be given outside of practice hours and any additional time needed will be scheduled by the athlete with the trainer/physiotherapist outside of practice hours.
10. Injured athletes who cannot participate in practice must wear the uniform of the day unless otherwise excused by the Coaches and must attend all practices and meetings unless instructed otherwise by the Coaches.
11. All members of the National Training Center work in an integrated manner. The Performance Support Team, Medical Support Team and Artistic Swimming Coaches share information on a regular basis and work in collaboration to ensure fully integrated performance and training. Member of the National Training Center will be asked to fill out a consent form to allow the Medical staff to share medical information related to their performance with the Performance Support Team and the Artistic Swimming Coaches.

### **F. Drugs and Banned Substances**

1. Alcohol will not be consumed by any athlete during a National Team event (training, training camps, events, competitions).
2. No athlete is permitted to possess or use any illegal drugs.
3. USAAS will not tolerate any of its athletes using banned substances. Banned substances are defined by FINA, World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency (USADA).

Athletes must adhere to all WADA, FINA, USADA and USOPC anti-doping protocols, policies, and procedures. This includes participation in out of competition testing as required by the WADA, FINA, USADA, USOPC Rules. Athletes will be provided with information on banned substances and may be subject to random drug testing. Athletes must understand the consequences of using substances that are banned. Any athlete associated with the buying, selling or use of illegal or banned substances will be subject to penalties determined by USADA and/or FINA.

4. Any questions that you may have concerning drug education, banned substances and drug testing procedures can be answered by calling the USADA Drug Reference Line @ 1-800-233-0393 or 1-719-785-2020 (outside the U.S.) or on line at [www.usantidoping.org](http://www.usantidoping.org).

5. You must complete your USADA whereabouts on a timely manner and remember to update them if there is a change in the schedule. This is the athlete's responsibility not the Team Manager. If you miss a control, make sure to notify the High Performance Manager, Coaches and Team Manager.

### **G. Practice and Field Rules**

1. When you report for a training session you must be fit and ready to train. That means awake and ready to go. In the morning, you must have had breakfast before practice.

2. When requested, you must wear the assigned practice uniform - no exceptions.

3. You will be assigned to carry the equipment (Video, iPad, iPod, Speaker, TV, Medical Kit...) on a rotating basis.

4. Practice officially begins with warm up. Video, land drill and other meetings are part of practice.

5. You must not leave the practice unless permission is given by the Coaches.

6. The Coaches or Team Manager will communicate the schedule. There may be changes to the schedule depending on the quality of practice and unforeseen circumstances (change in music schedule, weather...).

7. At competition, athletes must ensure they carry their accreditation at all times.

8. Strength training, Gymnastics, Ballet, Pilates, Weekly Nutrition, Weekly Sport Psychology Sessions are fully part of the training requirements of the Senior National Training Squad. National Training Center athletes must meet with the Nutritionist and Sport Psychologist on a regular basis as advised by the Coaches. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary sanctions, fines, and dismissal from the Squad.

9. Athletes who have specific training requirements for Nutrition, Sport Psychology, Strength training or posture rehabilitation may have to sign a 'Better Health Agreement' which defines what these requirements are, when they need to be completed by and the consequences if they are not completed on time.

### **H. Nutrition**

1. You are now a member of the Senior National Training Squad and as such your diet and preparation should reflect the fact that you are a world-class athlete. Foods that will enhance your performance include complex carbohydrates (Vegetables, whole cereals, fresh fruit, fish, poultry) and protein; try to avoid any fried preparations and simple sugars like chocolate and soda, which only serve as empty calories.

2. You also must stay well hydrated at all times and especially when travelling long distance by plane.
3. As you travel to different countries you must be prepared for foods which look and taste differently than what you are accustomed to. Be prepared to adapt to this situation, because a proper diet is essential for maximizing your performance.

### **I. Publicity and Public Relations**

1. You should go out of your way to act as a role model.
2. Publicity and promotion of this sport play an important part in the continued growth of Artistic swimming, so you may often be asked to participate in events and promotional activities.
3. All interviews with the media must be cleared with the High Performance Manager, Coaches, the Team Manager and/or the USAAS Media Officer.
4. In media interviews, be courteous, on time and cooperative.
5. Be careful what you say! There is no such thing as "off the record." All communications from the athletes must reflect positively on USAAS. If you do not have anything positive to say, do not say anything or let someone else comment.
6. USAAS promotes good sportsmanship and respect of the competitors, do not criticize the performance of other athletes or countries but rather reflect on your personal performance.
7. USAAS may organize media training. You must attend all Media Sessions as directed by USAAS.

### **J. Disciplinary sanctions**

1. Offense level 1 - this includes minimal offenses such as stopping in a training set, refusing to perform the training requirements requested by the coaches (stopping in a figure or routine run through), poor attitude and disrespect (rolling eyes, responding back).

The consequences for the level 1 offenses are defined by the Coaches as needed. Example of possible sanctions applied:

- Athlete would be pulled out of pattern or removed from practice

2. Offense level 2 – this includes on-going tardiness, failing to meet with support staff (nutrition, sport psychologist, physician, physiotherapist) for regular meetings, repeat level 1 offenses (following multiple warnings), inappropriate social media and publicity communication, loss or destruction of equipment (competitions suits, sound equipment), etc.

The consequences for level 2 offenses are defined by the Coaches and the High Performance Manager. Example of possible consequences are:

- Warning letter to athletes/parents
- Monetary fine (for lost or damaged equipment)
- 3-day suspension
- Temporarily moved to alternate position
- Community hours
- Counseling

3. Offense level 3 – this includes repeat offense level 1 and 2 (following multiple warnings), missed practices without notice, violations of USAAS Code of Conduct (alcohol and substance

abuse), USADA violations (failed testing), not respecting curfew times without notice to the High Performance Manager or coaches.

The consequences for level 3 offenses are defined by the Coaches, the High Performance Manager and an Athlete Representative. Example of possible consequences are:

- Removal from small routines
- Prolonged suspension from the training and competing
- Removal from the National Training Center and/or squad
- Removal from training camp and/or competition and sent home

**AFTER READING THIS ATHLETE HANDBOOK SECTION, PLEASE SIGN THE AGREEMENT FORM BELOW AND RETURN IT TO THE HIGH PERFORMANCE MANAGER OR TEAM MANAGER.**

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I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the USAAS Senior National Training Squad Athlete Handbook. I accept its provisions and agree to abide by the guidelines set forth within.

Athlete Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
(If Under 18 Years of Age)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_