



2026 Swim and Dive Team Handbook

Welcome to the Signature Club Gators!

The Signature Club Gators is a swim and dive team comprised of athletes ages 4-18. Our mission is to teach and train competitive summer swimmers and divers; to promote healthy competition, sportsmanship and teamwork; and to foster friendships and a lifelong love of the sport of swimming and diving. Our goal is to help make every athlete his or her best, and to instill pride and confidence in all our Gators, regardless of age, ability, skill, or experience.

Our team belongs to and follows the rules of the Central Kentucky Swim & Dive Conference (CKSDC). The CKSDC is made up of swim and dive teams from Lexington and the surrounding area. The website for the CKSDC is www.centralkentuckyswimdive.com. All rules and regulations as well as meet schedules, results, and Conference Championship information can also be accessed on this site.

PREREQUISITES FOR SWIM AND DIVE TEAM:

Swim Team: SWIM TEAM IS NOT A FORM OF SWIM LESSONS. Children six and younger must be able to swim half the length (12.5 meters) of the pool independently on the first day of practice. Children 7-10 must be able to swim the entire length (25 meters) of the pool on the first day of practice. Children 11 and older must be able to swim two lengths (50 meters) of the pool on the first day of practice. **New swimmers will be required to complete a swim evaluation to determine if the minimum requirements to be on the team can be met.** The Head Swim Coach will decide if a child has the necessary skills to participate in team practices and meets. **Children will not be entered into meets until they have demonstrated consistent ability to swim the length of the pool independently.**

Mini Gators Developmental Team: Children not yet ready for the swim team are invited to join our developmental team. To participate in Mini Gators, swimmers must be willing to go under water and be able to swim a few feet on their own. Practices occur twice weekly and a summer schedule will be posted. We will accept 30 Mini Gators. Registrations will be accepted until the maximum enrollment is reached. Additional swimmers will be placed on a waiting list and enrolled if any openings occur. You will not be charged unless your child is accepted in the program. When ready, swimmers may be promoted to the Gators swim team at any time during the season at the discretion of the coaching staff. Mini Gators do not participate in meets; therefore, parents are not required to sign up to volunteer unless your child is invited to join the full team.

Dive Team: Children as young as five are welcome to join the dive team if they are willing to independently jump off the diving board into deep water and can independently swim to the side. The Head Dive Coach will decide if a child is ready to participate in dive team practices and meets.

Parents: The Signature Club Gators is a volunteer organization, which relies heavily on the manpower of parent volunteers. All families are expected to volunteer throughout the season and to meet a minimum requirement of shifts worked. Alternately, families may opt out of the volunteer commitment by paying a fee. For more information on the Gators volunteer program, please refer to the team handbook.

Registration

We offer online registrations for Swim & Dive Team. Online registrations for the swim and dive team will open in March with Mini Gator registration generally opening in April.

Mini Gators

- \$206.70 (\$195.00 + tax)

Swim & Dive Team

- 12 and under athletes: \$206.70 (\$195.00 + tax)
- 13 and over athletes: \$127.20 (\$120.00 + tax)

Registration fees will increase by \$50 for athletes who register after **May 8, 2026**. Athletes must be registered and paid by **May 8th, 2026** deadline in order to receive the early fee discount and the team t-shirt included with registration. ***Please check the website for registration deadlines.***

There will be a non-refundable convenience fee and tax for registering online.

Coaching Staff

SWIMMING

Michelle Doolin, Head Coach- 859.333.6091 swimteam@signatureclub.org

Cole Pleasants, Assistant Coach

Morgan Neuer, Assistant Coach

Makayla Ward, Assistant Coach

EJ Quijano, Assistant Coach

Hadley Garrard, Assistant Coach

DIVING

Jennifer Duncan, Head Dive Coach

Private Lessons

The swim and dive team coaches are available for private lessons. The cost is set by each individual Coach and sign-ups can be set up by contacting an instructor by phone, text, or email. Please do not interrupt practice to discuss the scheduling of lessons.

Practice Schedule

Please check the website for practice start dates.

Swim Practice

Mondays

The pool does not open until 12pm on Mondays, only swimmers who are practicing will be allowed on deck.

- 10 and over age group: 9:30 am -10:30 am
- 7-9 year olds: 10:30 am -11:15 am
- 6 & under - 11:15 am -11:45 am

Wednesdays

- All swimmers practice together from 9:30 am - 10:30 am

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays

- 11 and over age group: 8:45 am - 9:45 am
- 9 & 10 year olds: 9:45 am - 10:30 am
- 7 & 8 year olds: 10:30 am - 11:15 am
- 6 & under: 11:15 am - 11:45 am

Dive Practice

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays

- 8 and under: 12:00 pm - 12:45 pm
- 9 and 10 year olds: 12:45 pm - 1:30 pm
- 11 and over: 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm

Meet Schedule and Policies

Dual meets are on **Wednesdays**. *The Pool closes at 1:00 pm for HOME meet prep.*

WARM-UPS

Home Meet **DIVING** 1:30 pm: Signature Club 2:00 pm: visiting team

Home Meet **SWIMMING** 4:00 pm: Signature Club 4:30 pm: visiting team

MEET START TIMES

HOME **DIVE MEETS** 2:30 pm.

HOME **SWIM MEETS** 5:00 pm.

During the swim meet, all starts will be on the block end of the pool.

AWAY MEET START TIMES VARY. Dive meets will be at 2:30 or 3:00 pm. Swim meets will be at 5:00 or 5:30 pm with warm ups taking place 30 minutes before the scheduled start time. Directions for away meets can be found on www.centrankentuckyswimdive.com under each teams' page.

Regular Season Dual Meets

- Please check the website for Dual Meet Dates and Locations

CKSDC (Conference) Championship Diving & Swim Meet at Spindletop

Please check website for Conference Meet Dates

- Sunday–Diving Championship
- Monday–Swimming Championship age 10 and under (Preliminaries)
- Tuesday–Swimming Championship age 11 and over (Preliminaries)
- Wednesday–Swimming Championship for qualifiers (Finals)

Meet Sign-Out Instructions

Meet attendance will need to be declared the Friday before each dual meet. The sign-out deadline for Championships will be posted on the website. *All team members are expected to attend the Conference Championship meet.*

Completing meet entries take the coaches several hours. Please be respectful by letting them know if your child will not be attending as soon as possible and before the deadline. If possible, please do not schedule vacations during the Championship meet.

Inclement Weather

Meets will always go on unless there is severe weather—thunder and/or lightning. NEVER ASSUME A MEET WILL BE CANCELLED! We are required by CKSDC bylaws to “wait out” storms.

Team Etiquette

We are proud to be a swim and dive team with a great reputation for sportsmanship. We feel that the behavior of both the team and the parents are a reflection of our club and also of our history. Our coaches place great emphasis on sportsmanship and etiquette during meets and appropriate behavior is required at all times. In short, our athletes and our families are expected to be good sports, to be respectful and gracious, and to clean up after themselves at home and on the road.

The policy of the CKSDC on smoking and alcohol is as follows:

102.12 SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

- Smoking and drinking of alcoholic beverages behind the starting blocks is prohibited. Timers, judges, and meet workers may not smoke or drink while working the meet. (Adopted 5-25-86) NOTE: Some teams do not permit alcoholic beverages on deck. Please check with team coach about their club rules when visiting.*

What to Bring

Packing properly for a swim and dive meet is very important. Your child will need two towels (one to use and one to sit on), goggles (label these and keep up with them), dry clothes (flannel pants and hooded sweatshirts are favorites) for after the meet, water for hydration, suit and cap, and money for the concession stand are musts. Many kids also bring games or electronics that can be played between events. YOUR CHILDREN MUST KEEP UP WITH THEIR OWN BELONGINGS. The lost and found is always overflowing after a meet; double check your things before you leave after the meet’s conclusion.

Parents of Younger Swimmers

Swimmers between the ages of four and ten will be managed at meets by volunteer age group parents. It is the job of the age group parents to get the swimmers in order, bring them to the pool deck, and ensure that they are in place to be checked in by the Clerk of Course. Age group parents have signs and established areas where they gather their groups.

PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN CHILDREN BEFORE AND AFTER THEY SWIM. Age group parents are not babysitters, and do not have charge of our young swimmers between their events. It is not the responsibility of the age group parent to find missing children or track down children before their events. Please help the age group parents do their jobs by chaperoning your children and getting them to their meeting area in a timely manner.

Age group parents are NOT responsible for writing swim events on swimmers' arms with Sharpie markers. Please do this for your child before taking them to the meeting area for their age group.

Before leaving a meet check with your child's age group parent to see if he/she child is in a freestyle relay. **PLEASE DO NOT LEAVE UNLESS YOU ARE SURE THAT YOUR CHILD IS FINISHED WITH ALL OF HIS OR HER EVENTS.** Not only will missing a relay affect the opportunity for three other swimmers to swim, it could also impact the number of points scored by the entire team.

Conference Championships

The CKSDC Championship meet is by far the most important meet of the season. It is a fun meet and the swimmers and divers have a great time. In order to be successful at this meet, we need everyone to participate. This meet is what we ALL work toward the whole summer! The meet is generally the second week of July and begins on a Sunday with diving. All championship competition will be at Spindletop. Diving for all age groups will take place on Sunday. Monday is preliminary competition for swimmers 10 and younger. Tuesday is preliminary competition for swimmers 11 and older. If a swimmer has finished in the top 16 on Monday or Tuesday, he or she will return on Wednesday to compete in finals. This includes relays. All relays are required to swim in finals if they were not disqualified during prelims. The meet will begin in the morning each day and end in the afternoon. ALL swimmers and divers are expected to compete in the Championship meet. The coaches are more than willing to help you get your child to the meet if you have a conflict. Due to the large size of our team we are required to provide many volunteers. If your child swims at Conference you will be expected to work a shift during Conference.

Team Communications

Each week an email will be sent out with pertinent team information. We also use REMIND to communicate team info. Sign-up information will be sent via email.

Parent Volunteer Requirements

Parent participation is vital to the success of the Gators swim and dive team. We literally cannot do it without you – meets cannot start until all volunteers are in place.

It is the responsibility of family of all swim and dive team members to volunteer for the minimum required shifts during the regular dual meet season and be available to work additional shifts during the CKSDC Championship. Minimum required shifts are:

- Families with *swim team participants only*: three (3) shifts during regular season swim meets and be available to work one day during the CKSDC Swim Championship (held Monday through Wednesday)
- Families with *dive team participants only*: two (2) shifts during regular season dive meets and be available to work during the CKSDC Dive Championship (held on Sunday)
- Families with *both swim and dive team participants*: three (3) shifts during swim meets and one (1) shift during dive meets and be available to work two days during the CKSDC Championship

Swim meet shifts are for either the first or second half of the swim meet. Dive meet shifts are for the full dive meet. Shifts typically last two to three hours.

ALL families are required to complete work shifts as outlined above. A team member's non-participation in competitive meets does NOT exclude families from these requirements. Shift requirements are per family, *not* per swimmer/diver.

Opt-Out Fee

You may opt out of meet volunteer obligations by paying \$245 with the team application and dues. The deadline to sign up for volunteer shifts or pay the \$245 opt out fee will be posted on the website, but is generally the second week of June. After this date the fee is \$90 per volunteer shift not completed. **Opt out fee DOES NOT include CKSDC Championship work shifts of volunteer needs.**

Volunteer Registration, Credit and Fines

Volunteer registration will be available online via Sign Up prior to the start of the swim season. To receive credit for shifts worked, volunteers *must* sign-in with the volunteer check-in person prior to the start of the work shift. At home meets, the volunteer check-in and orientation will be near the Main Pool Desk. Arrive at least ten minutes prior to the start of your shift.

If you cannot work at your scheduled time it is your responsibility to find a replacement. Notify the volunteer coordinator of replacement changes. If no one shows up for your work shift *you* will be fined \$90 for each shift not worked. **Should you not complete volunteer duties equaling the minimum required shifts by the end of the regular dual meet season, you will be fined \$90 for each shift not worked.**

Additional volunteers will be needed for the Conference Championships. If your child is competing you are expected to volunteer if needed.

Volunteer Position Descriptions

- **TIMERS** –time the swim races (heats) with provided stopwatches, responsible for one lane
- **RECORDERS** –write down the times achieved by swimmers in each heat, responsible for one lane
- **RIBBONS** –distribute ribbons to swimmers after each heat
- **RUNNER** –takes written results from the recorders and disqualification slips from officials to the scorers' table
- **FINISH RECORDER** –writes down the order of finish from each heat for the scorers
- **DRY ERASE RECORDER**-documents order of finish so ribbon workers can distribute ribbons. This is done with colored magnets that are placed on lane numbers.
- **AGE GROUP PARENTS** – manage swimmers of same gender and age group for an entire meet; organize swimmers, walk group to pool deck for each event, and check them in with the Clerk of Course; an established area and signs are provided.
- **VOLUNTEER CHECK IN AND HEAT SHEET SALES** – checks in all volunteers for both meet halves; sells heat sheets before the meet; ***must arrive at least fifteen minutes before warm-ups***
- **MEET SET UP/TAKE DOWN** – home meets only, from 1:00-3:00pm day of meet for set up and briefly at the conclusion of the meet
- **CLERK OF COURSE** – ensures swimmers are in correct lanes and heats prior to each race

The following volunteer positions require special training or certification. (If you are interested in becoming certified in one or more of the following specialty areas please contact Head Coach Michelle Doolin.)

- **STROKE AND TURN JUDGE** - evaluates legality of strokes during heats
- **STARTER** – starts each heat using official starting system
- **SCORER** – completes computer scoring of swim and dive meet
- **DIVING JUDGE** – scores divers’ performance after each dive
- **FINISH JUDGE** – determines order of finish after each swim heat

Team Swim caps and Suits

Silicone caps are provided for each swimmer with registration. They will be distributed along with team shirts at the start of the season. Additional silicone caps are available for purchase for \$10.

Our official team suits will be ordered through a Swim Outlet Team Store. Once the suits have been added and the store is open, we will email and update you with information.

Swim and Dive Team Parent Board

Melanie Gabbard, Volunteer Coordinator/Parent Rep.

mgabbard@akeraclaims.com

859.270.9049 (feel free to call or text)

Tansy Coats, Meet Director

Questions

There is a significant learning curve associated with swimming and diving, and meets can seem overwhelming. Please feel free to approach any board member with any questions or concerns you may have. We have assembled this handbook to try and help provide as much information as possible, but there is no way include everything. Please do not hesitate to contact any board member should you have any questions.

APPENDIX

Glossary of Swimming Terms

Blocks – The starting platforms located behind each lane. Using the block is optional, although all swimmers are encouraged and taught to use it.

Circle Seeding – A method of seeding swimmers when they are participating in a prelims/finals event, used at our CKSC Championship meet.

Circle Swimming - Performed by staying to the right of the black line on the bottom of the pool.

Clerk of Course - The person(s) responsible for getting swimmers to heats and lanes for competition.

Consolation Heat - The swimmers who finished 9-16 in the preliminary session and will swim again.

DQ (Disqualified) - Occurs when a swimmer commits an infraction against the USA Swimming guidelines. DQ swimmers are not eligible for awards, nor can their time be used as an official time.

Drill - An exercise involving a portion or part of a stroke used to enhance overall stroke technique.

Dual meet - A meet where there is a head-to-head competition between two teams.

False Start - Occurs when a swimmer is moving during the start of a race, leaving before the signal to do so.

Finals – The session of a meet for which one must qualify by swimming fast enough in the preliminary session.

Final Heat - The fastest 8 competitors from the preliminary session, which compete in the Finals.

Flags - Used for backstroke to signal the swimmers that the wall is coming up. These flags are placed 5 yards or 5 meters from the wall.

Heats - A division of an event in which there are too many swimmers to compete at one time.

Heat Sheet - A listing of all swimmers, broken down into heats with lane assignments and event numbers.

Pace Clock - Clock used to check pace or to maintain intervals put forth by the coach in practice.

Prelims - Short for preliminary. Races in which a swimmer can qualify for the Finals.

Psych Sheet - A printed ranking of the competitors in each event.

Ribbon Distributor – The volunteers responsible for passing out ribbons at the conclusion of each heat.

Referee - Swimming official whom has the authority over all other officials at the meet. **Scratch**
- To withdraw from an event in a competition.

Seeded Times - The time a swimmer uses to enter a meet. These times determine in what heat and lane you will be seeded.

Split - The time recorded for each part of a swim.

Sprint - Describes the races short in distance. In training, it refers to going as fast as possible on a particular swim.

Starter – The official at a meet responsible for initiating the beginning of a race. He/She also calls the competitors to the starting blocks.

Streamline - The position used to gain maximum distance and speed after the start and off each wall following the turn.

Stroke Judge – A certified official who determines the legality of a swimmer’s stroke. This individual has the power to DQ a swimmer because of improper technique.

Timer – The volunteers sitting behind the starting blocks/finish end of the pool, who are responsible for getting watch times on events.

Touch Pad - The large sensitive board mounted on the wall, which when hit, triggers the electronic timing system to stop at the end of a race.

Warm Down - Low intensity swimming used to rid the body of excess lactic acid, and to gradually reduce heart rate and respiration.

Warm Up - Low intensity swimming used to get muscles loose and warm, in addition to increasing heart rate and respiration.

Glossary of Diving Terms

Approach: Steps a diver takes to the end of a springboard or platform before take-off.

Back dive: A dive where a diver takes off with his back to the water, and spins backwards in the air.

Baulk: A false start to a dive, i.e. a restart.

Crow-hop: When a diver is performing a dive from the end of the board (back or inward) and their toes leave the board and then come back in contact with the board at any time; a bounce before your jump. This causes an automatic 1-3 point deduction from each judge's score.

Degree of difficulty (DD): A rating, ranging from 1.3 to at least 3.6, that measures the difficulty of a specific dive and is factored into the total score after the judges give their scores. The degree of difficulty is based upon a mathematical formula.

Entry: The end of a dive when the diver enters the water. The entry should be vertical. Ideally, although there is no such rule, the diver should create little or no splash.

Free position: A combination of straight, pike or tuck positions used only in twisting dives.

Forward dive: A dive where the diver starts from a position facing the water and spins forward in the air.

Hurdle: The last part of a diver's approach to a forward facing take-off, where the final step starts from one foot and ends on two feet before leaving the board.

Inward dive: A dive where the diver begins with their back to the water and, during the execution, rotates toward the board.

Layout: A diving position where a diver's body and legs are straight, the feet are together, and the toes are pointed; also called "straight".

Pike: A diving position where the body is bent at the hips, the legs are straight, and the toes are pointed.

Reverse dive: A dive from a forward facing take-off where the diver jumps upward and outward, then rotates backwards, also sometimes called "gainers".

Rip: The ideal entry that creates little splash, named for its ripping sound as the diver enters the water.

Somersault: The full rotation of the body on an imaginary horizontal axis through the hips.

Take-off: A diver's lift-off from the board.

Tuck: A diving position in which the body is bent at the waist and knees, with the thighs drawn tightly to the chest and the heels pulled close to the buttocks. The legs should be kept together and the toes pointed.

Twisting dive: Any dive that includes a twist with the legs together and the toes pointed at all times.