

WASHINGTON WATER SHARKS SWIM TEAM



FAMILY/SWIMMER HANDBOOK 2023/2024

Sponsored By "The Y's Men & Women's Club"

Dear Swim Team Families –

The Washington Water Sharks Swim team strives to fulfill the mission of the YMCA: to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

The YMCA strives to build character in all who participate in YMCA programming. The 3 focus areas are:

- 1.) Youth Development
- 2.) Healthy Living
- 3.) Social Responsibility

Swim team seeks to encourage and motivate each swimmer to develop his or her individual skills and to enhance self-esteem and build confidence. The team can only accomplish this through the active involvement of each swimmer and his/her family. Everyone is involved in the successful coordination of the swim team: administration, aquatics personnel, Water SHARKS Shiver and coaches. Together, they pledge to make this an experience that will positively shape your child.

We thank you in advance for your involvement and commitment to this program and we look forward to a fantastic swim season!

Swim Strong! Swim Fast! Swim Determined!

Samantha Van Houten, Head Coach
swimteam@washingtoney.org

Water SHARKS Shiver, Family Booster Group

Participation Requirements:

To participate on swim team:

- Swimmers are required to be YMCA members (see swim team fees, below).
- 8 and under swimmers must be able to swim 25 yards (one length) of freestyle and 25 yards (one length) of backstroke continuously, without assistance or floatation device.
- 9 and up swimmers must be able to swim 100 yards (4 lengths), without assistance or floatation device using 2 of the 4 competitive strokes (freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, or butterfly).

***Swimmers who are unable to swim 50 yards of freestyle and/or backstroke should consider swim lessons prior to joining swim team. Swim team is not a replacement for swim lessons.**

Swimmers will be grouped using the age of the swimmer as of December 1.

Participation Supplies:

- **SUIT/SWIM CAP/GOGGLES:** A one piece suit for girls is required. Jammers are preferred for boys. Team suits are available for purchase, but are **not required**. Team swim caps are strongly encouraged for swim meets by Iowa YMCA Competitive Swimming organization (available for purchase from the Water SHARKS Shiver) but are not required. Goggles are encouraged. We usually have a few extra pairs if someone forgets, but please bring your own. Swimmers 12 & under will not be allowed to wear "tech" suits.
- **CLOTHING/APPAREL:** **Optional** apparel orders for team spirit wear are coordinated by the Water SHARKS Shiver. Information will be sent out when available.

Fees:

Y memberships and dues must be paid by October 20th. ***All memberships and dues are payable to the Washington Community Y. If these fees are not paid by the date specified, the swimmer/s may not be allowed to practice or attend swim meets.***

All swimmers must have a **Washington Community Y Membership**. The following memberships may be obtained by swimmers and/or their families:

- \$80.00 – 1 year Youth Membership
- \$240.00 – 1 year Teen Membership
- \$720.00 – 1 year Family Membership

Swim Team Season Dues: \$175 per swimmer. Swim team dues specifically cover the cost of participating in swim team and cover all expenses incurred by the Y to conduct swim team: meet registration fees; coaching and coaches travel expenses; promotion and printing; scheduling and submissions; lifeguards; t-shirt for each participant.

Swim Team Rules:

- **Always scan your YMCA membership card at the front desk when you arrive.**
- Be on time and ready to swim. That means on the deck with equipment ready when your workout begins, not talking in the bathroom or hanging out in the locker room.
- Parents and family members will not be allowed on the pool deck during practice. They may wait in the lobby area or the pool observation area.
- Work hard and try your best!
- Demonstrate proper sportsmanship. Treat your coaches and teammates with respect. Swimmers are expected to be on their best behavior at practice and meets. Appropriate language and behavior will be used in the Y (including pool area and locker rooms) or when on the road.

Practice Times:

Age Group	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday
8 & Under	4:15-5:00 pm	No Practice	4:15-5:00 pm
9 & 10 year olds	5:00-5:45 pm	No Practice	5:00-5:45 pm
11 & 12 year olds	5:45-6:45 pm	No Practice	5:45-6:45 pm
13 & up	6:45-8:00 pm	7:00-8:30 pm	6:45-8:00 pm

- **ONLY new swimmers may 'try-out', without paying any fees, at special practice times on Monday October 9th.**
- Returning swimmers start October 16th. The regular swim practice schedule is effective up until the sectional meet. Regular practice times may change for swimmers who qualify for state or regional meets.
- There are **no practices** when Washington Community School District cancels classes or gets out early due to inclement weather.
- No Practice Dates (some may be added): October 31st (Halloween), November 21 & 23, December 21-January 1 (optional swim clinics may happen during this time), and March 4th.

Family Responsibilities:

The single most important thing that families can do to help their child is to instill in their swimmer a strong and healthy sense of sportsmanship, character, and self-image. Swimming, just like any other sport, requires a commitment! In addition, parents and guardians can do the following to help their swimmer have the best possible experience with swim team:

- Keep yourself up to date on your child's swim team activities.
- Volunteer to time (at away meets) if needed, and help with team activities.
- Be uplifting and supportive of your child throughout the season.
- Help your child plan, set, strive and achieve their goals.
- Be patient. Each swimmer progresses at a different pace.
- Speak with coaches directly about swimmer and officials concerns in a respectful manner; do so at an appropriate time and place, and **not during meets or during practice.**

Much of swimming is an individual sport, but also important to remember that each swimmer plays a vital role on the **TEAM.**

Swim Meets:

We encourage swimmers to participate in a swim meet; however, it is not mandatory to do so. Each swimmer must compete in **THREE** YMCA meets to participate in the State meet (if qualifying time is met). ***Meets rarely get cancelled for weather, please prioritize these.**

These can last most of the day (usually 4+ hours). Warm-ups are sometimes 30-45 minutes before the meet starts. Once the meet starts, everyone will watch for their event numbers so they know when to go to the Clerk of Course (more information on this once meets start).

**Coaches are often on deck the whole meet, but ask a returning swimmer/parent if you need help or have questions about the meet.

Signups

Swim meet signups will be done using the Team Unify website or app. An email for specific swim meet signups will be sent to parents/guardians. Swimmers can sign up for meets indicating specific events they want to swim, or just stating "yes" or "no" for attendance. If you have questions or problems, please contact the coaches.

Travel

Parents/guardians are responsible for driving swimmers to and from meets. Carpooling is an option but not facilitated by the Washington Community Y.

Day of the Meet

- If you are unable to attend the meet, call your coach as soon as possible. This is very important so the coaches can re-adjust relays if needed.
- Arrive at least 10-15 minutes before warm-ups.
- Check in with volunteer or coaches to receive event numbers.
- All swimmers are required to warm up at our assigned time unless approved by a coach.

Communications:

Team email: swimteam@washingtoney.org

Team website: www.teamunify.com/ymca-2229 or through the link on the Washington Community Y webpage, www.washingtoney.org, under the programs/aquatics tab.

Mobile App: OnDeck (iOS, Android)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/watersharksswimteam

- **TEAM UNIFY:** We will be using Team Unify again for all swim team communications. The website will use email and SMS text messaging to communicate with swim team families. Coaches' contact information will be available on the website. The Team Unify website has a calendar with all meets and events, including addresses of meet locations and information about meet start times, warm ups, etc.

Each family will have an account to track their swimmers' times, meet signups, practice times and other information. You will receive an email to set up your account after we have updated your contact information through registration. Team Unify can be accessed online via the website or on your mobile phone through the app. *Only **one** main login can be used, please provide an email that works best

- **BULLETIN BOARD:** Information is also posted on the swim team bulletin board located on the wall next to the hallway that leads to the pool.
- **COACHES COMMUNICATION:** If you need to talk to the coaching staff, please do so before or after practice, by phone or e-mail, or by using the website. ***Please do not try to talk to coaches during practice or when they are busy at a meet.*** We appreciate your support with this!
- **CANCELLATIONS:** If a practice or meet must be canceled because of inclement weather, the cancellation will be posted to the KCII cancellations page and Facebook, as well as sent by email and/or text message.

Washington Community Y Water Sharks Swim Team 2023-2024 Schedule

October 9	Try-out practice times (new swimmers only)
October 16	First day of practice for all swimmers
October 20	Y Membership/Swim Team Dues must be paid for all swimmers
October 31	No Practice, Halloween
November 11	@ Muscatine (Returning swimmers only) – Modified - 25y 8 & under, 50y 9 & up, no 8u relays
November 18	@ Burlington
November 21 & 23	No practice, Thanksgiving
December 2	@ Oskaloosa
December 16	@ North Scott County
Dec 21-Jan 1	No practice – Christmas break
December	Optional Swim Team Clinics (Days/Times TBD) – Xmas break
January 6	@ Ottumwa
January 20	@ Muscatine – Regular +1000 Free
January 27	@ Oskaloosa
February 3	@ Wellmark (Des Moines)
February 10-11	Sectional weekend (date/location TBD)
March 2	State – Boys @ Marshalltown
March 3	State – Girls @ Marshalltown
March 22-24	Y Regional @ Linn Mar Aquatic Center, Marion, IA

*Suit and clothing order information will be sent out as soon as it's available.

Championship Meets

*****Important highlights*****

***Swimmers will be able to qualify for the 2023-24 YMCA State Swim Meet and Regional Meet during any YMCA Closed Season Meet within the current season. Times from USA observed HS meets can be used as Q times.** Swimmers will still need to meet the three meet criteria to be able to attend.

***Sectionals will be optional to attend if State Q times and 3 meets have already been met.**

***Sectional Meet:** This will count as a **THIRD** meet, but swimmers are encouraged to swim more meets prior to Sectionals in case of weather, illness, etc. YMCA pays registration fees. Here is the new information for the upcoming season for Sectionals:

***State Qualifiers:**

*Can enter events in which they have a State Qualifying time as exhibition only to better their seed time. (There may be some changes)

*Can enter events in which they do not currently have a state qualifying time.

*Can opt to skip swimming in the sectional meet

State Meet: To qualify for this meet, the swimmer must equal or better the state qualifying times *AT ANY MEET* (or have a qualifying time from 3/1/23). *Qualifying with a relay team does not guarantee that same relay will swim at State together. Coaches will choose State relays as well as alternates. YMCA pays registration fee.

Y Regional Meet: (YMCA meet): The swimmer must meet qualifying times at *ANY MEET DURING THE SEASON*. A list of events and qualifying times will be posted on the bulletin board and the website. YMCA pays registration fee.

***State qualifying times are now allowed from 3/1/23 until Sectionals.**