



Disability Inclusion & Accommodation Policy

Purpose

BLAST is committed to fostering a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all swimmers. In accordance with USA Swimming policies, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and applicable California nondiscrimination laws, the team does not discriminate against swimmers on the basis of disability and will consider reasonable accommodations when appropriate.

BLAST is a competitive swim program and is not a medical, therapeutic, or special education provider. Coaches and staff are not trained to provide medical care, therapeutic services, or specialized supervision. The team acknowledges these limitations and seeks to balance inclusion with swimmer safety, program integrity, and coach capacity, recognizing that a competitive team environment may not be appropriate for every swimmer.

Guiding Principles

- All swimmers are entitled to dignity, respect, and fair treatment.
- Safety of swimmers, coaches, and staff is paramount.
- Reasonable accommodations may be considered when they do not fundamentally alter the nature of the competitive program or create undue safety risks.
- Participation on the team does not substitute for medical care, therapy, or specialized supervision.

Scope of Team Responsibilities

Coaches and staff at BLAST are trained in competitive swim instruction and athlete development. They are not licensed or trained to provide:

- Medical care or monitoring
- Therapeutic or rehabilitative services
- One-to-one behavioral, emotional, or physical supervision
- Crisis intervention related to disabilities

As such, the team may not be equipped to support all disability-related needs within a group practice setting.

Requesting Accommodations or Modifications

Consistent with USA Swimming's Disability Inclusion policy and California best practices, requests for accommodations *must be initiated by the swimmer's parent or legal guardian.*

The process is as follows:

1. The parent/guardian submits a written request to team administration, describing the swimmer's needs and requested accommodations.
2. Team administration will collaborate directly with the swimmer's assigned coach to evaluate the request.
3. Decisions will consider:
 - Swimmer and team safety
 - The competitive structure of the program
 - Impact on practice flow, lane management, and other swimmers
 - Coach training, staffing, and supervision capacity
4. Approved accommodations will be clearly defined and communicated. Accommodations may be temporary or ongoing and are subject to review.

Limits to Accommodations

While the team strives to be inclusive, accommodations may be denied or discontinued if:

- Safety cannot be reasonably ensured
- The modification fundamentally alters the competitive nature of the program
- The accommodation requires services outside the scope of coach training or team resources
- The swimmer's needs require individualized supervision beyond what a group practice can provide
- The team's swimmer or parent code of conduct is violated and opportunities to help correct have not been implemented by the swimmer and/or parent.

If accommodations cannot be reasonably implemented, team administration will communicate this decision respectfully and transparently with the family. If need be, recommendations for other swim teams will be given as referrals to the family.

Parent & Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/guardians are expected to:

- Provide accurate and timely information regarding their swimmer's needs
- Communicate changes in medical, physical, or behavioral status, via email sent to both the direct coach and team administration (email: admin@blastswimming.org).
- Work collaboratively with coaches and administration

- Understand that accommodations may evolve as circumstances change
- Read and sign the attached Parent / Guardian Acknowledgment of Disability Inclusion & Accommodation Policy (to be reviewed yearly upon the parents initiation).
- Please feel free to check out USA Swimming's Disability Policy:
<https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/disabilitydocuments/article-105.pdf>

Commitment

BLAST remains committed to compliance with USA Swimming policies, California nondiscrimination standards, and to fostering a respectful team culture. While we cannot meet every need, particularly where safety, supervision, or the competitive structure of the program would be compromised, we pledge to approach each situation with care, clarity, and professionalism consistent with the team's mission and the values of a competitive swim team.