

A Handbook of Policies & Procedures for



Club

Revised December 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents

Hamden Heronettes Synchronized Swim Club Expectations Agreement.....	3
Swimmer Responsibilities	4
Parent Responsibilities.....	4
Cell Phone and Recording Device Policy.....	4
Bullying Policy.....	5
Suspension and Expulsion Policy.....	5
Health Policies.....	5
Financial Obligations and Fundraising	6
Travel Policies, Procedures, and Expectations.....	7
Swimmer Behavior Guidelines for Meets.....	88
General Travel Cost Guidelines	8
Parent Volunteers at Away Meets	9
Team Apparel, Equipment & Competition Swimsuits	11
Types of Clinics, Meets, and Competitions	13
Grade Levels	16
Safesport Policies	16

Please Note: HHC is an initialization for Hamden Heronettes Synchronized Swimming Club and may be used in lieu of it throughout this document.

General Policies

Hamden Heronettes Synchronized Swimming Club Expectations Agreement

1. The Hamden Heronettes Synchronized Swimming Club is a competitive team. Skill assessments will be conducted by the coach(es) to determine swimming level and appropriate team competition level. Swimmers will be chosen to specific teams based on the swimmer's ability to successfully complete the skill assessment requirements for the appropriate level as determined by the coach.
2. There is NO POLICY that governs equal pool and coaching time for all athletes on the team. This is a coaching decision based on many factors. This is a competitive athletic program.
3. Swimmers are expected to attend ALL practices and meets. Extenuating circumstances that prohibit you from attending a practice will be reviewed by the coaching staff on an individual basis. A monthly practice schedule will be provided at the beginning of each month. A schedule for the competitive season will be provided as soon as meet dates are determined.
4. Personal communication between the swimmer's family and the coach is the ONLY way to be excused from a practice. Messages from teammates will not be considered an excuse.
5. All Hamden Heronettes rules must be followed by all associated with HHC as outlined in the Bylaws and Handbook.
6. Any team member caught using illegal substances (alcohol or other controlled substances) will be dismissed from the team.
7. By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read this Handbook in its entirety and agree to the HHC and SafeSport policies stated within.

I have read and will abide by the expectations listed above.

(Athlete Signature)

(date)

I have read and will encourage my child to follow the expectations listed above.

(Parent/Guardian Signature)

(date)

Swimmer Responsibilities

Be respectful. Be present. Be committed.

Heronettes must:

- Act in such a way as to represent the Hamden Heronettes well.
- Respect teammates, coaches, parents, chaperones, competitors, and officials.
- Support other Heronettes both in and out of the pool.
- Acknowledge competitors in a friendly way.
- Take direction from coaches and chaperones without debate. (Discuss problems later, in private.)
- Attend practice regularly. Attendance two weeks prior to competition is mandatory.
- Be on time and prepared to swim.
- Notify a coach as early as possible, but no less than one hour before practice, about an absence.
- Competitions are mandatory. Clear your calendars for meet dates at the beginning of the season.
- Set high personal standards to work hard at the pool and at home.
- Wear the team uniform (as directed by the coach) to, during, and from every competition.

Parent Responsibilities

Support. Encourage. Participate.

Parents/guardians can promote their swimmer's involvement and success by:

- Making sure the swimmer attends practice regularly and on time. If transportation is a problem, arrange a car pool.
- Cheering the Heronettes at competitions. (Note: Parents are not allowed on the pool deck at any time.)
- Volunteering to help the Parents' Association. Each family is expected to provide at least one parent/guardian to serve on a standing committee.
- Attending Parents' Association meetings and staying informed.
- Supporting fund-raising activities.
- Monitoring the care of the swimmer's suits, team apparel and equipment.
- Picking up their swimmer inside the building at scheduled dismissal time. All parents must be present during locker room time. Coaches' responsibility for swimmers ends at the end of practice. A parent/guardian must wait with the last swimmer if that swimmer's ride is late. NOTE: Swimmers should never be left at the pool without either a coach (at the beginning of practice) or parent to supervise.
- Paying registration fees, tuition, apparel/suits, and travel expenses promptly. Outstanding balances may result in the swimmer not being allowed to participate in practice or competitions.
- Being sure the swimmer is properly equipped for practice and meets.
- Notifying coaches of any health problems or changes during the season.
- Supporting coaches by reinforcing the list of Swimmer's Responsibilities.

NOTE: Parents may be asked to leave the pool area during practice, at the discretion of the coaches.

Cell Phone/Recording Device Policy

At no time will a cell phone, camera or recording device of any kind be allowed in a locker or changing room whether at home or away. At no time are any type of photographs, video or audio recordings allowed to be taken in a locker or changing room whether home or away. If a swimmer is found using a cell phone, camera or recording

device in a locker or changing room one of the following consequences will be administered at the discretion of the Head Coach and Team Manager and they will notify the board of their decision:

- A coach or a member of the board will call the swimmer's parent(s) to discuss the issue
- The swimmer will not be allowed to bring their device to practice.
- The swimmer will be suspended from the team and all team activities, including but not limited to practices, meets and social events.

Swimmers are encouraged to inform a coach, adult or board member if they see another swimmer violating this rule. If the swimmer confides to a parent, that parent is encouraged to contact a coach or board member. All notifications will be kept in complete confidentiality.

Bullying Policy

HHC has a zero tolerance policy concerning bullying, which is defined by the State of CT Public Act No. 11-232 (please refer to this document for the complete definition of bullying). If a swimmer is found to be bullying another swimmer one of the following consequences will be administered at the discretion of the Head Coach and Team Manager and they will notify the board of their decision:

- A coach or a member of the board will call the swimmer's parent(s) to discuss the issue
- The swimmer will be suspended from the team and all team activities, including but not limited to practices, meets and social events.

Swimmers are encouraged to inform a coach, adult or board member if they see a swimmer bullying another swimmer or if they themselves are being bullied. If the swimmer confides to a parent, that parent is encouraged to contact a coach or board member. All notifications will be kept in complete confidentiality.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

HHC has strict practice participation, behavior, bullying, and cell phone/recording device policies. If a swimmer violates any of these policies or partakes in gross misconduct of any kind, the coaches and team manager have the right to suspend or expel a swimmer from the team at their discretion with approval from the board. If a swimmer is suspended or expelled from the team, the swimmer's tuition will not be refunded.

Health Policies

Medical Release Forms

- All competitive swimmers of the Hamden Heronettes Synchronized Swim Team will be required to have a signed physical form from their Health Care Provider.
- Forms must be submitted to the Team Manager by December 1st to cover the upcoming competitive season.
- They must be dated no earlier than 18 months from the start of the season.

Illness/Injuries

- Swimmers with fevers, flu-like symptoms, or any other contagious illness should refrain from practice. Notify the coach prior to practice.
- Swimmers with any minor illness or injury (cold, headache, sprain, soreness, or muscle stress) are encouraged to attend practice to observe and to participate within their capacity.

- If an athlete has been seriously injured or absent due to any hospitalization or serious illness, permission to resume activities will be necessary in the form of a letter or email directly sent from all doctors that treated the swimmer (i.e. pediatrician, orthopedist, neurologist, etc.)
 - The responsible parent or guardian must keep the head coach informed regarding plans to return to the activity.
 - If the responsible parent and/or guardian have been unable to contact the head coach, he/she must contact the President of the Executive Board instead.
 - This will ensure that the coaching staff has the information they need regarding the physical and emotional situation of the particular swimmer and will be able to safely monitor the swimmer and recognize any recurring problems.
 - No athlete will be allowed to reenter the pool area, locker rooms, or any other Heronettes function until these steps have been taken.
- The staff reserves the right to ask a parent to be present at practices as deemed necessary.
Possible concussions at practice or other events: If a swimmer strikes their head/neck, is struck in the head/neck, or in any other way suspects a strike that could lead to a concussion, the coach will ask the swimmer to exit the pool and sit down. A coach (or other Heronettes adult as designated by the coach) will call the swimmer's parent/guardian, and if they are not available, the emergency contacts listed on the swimmer's form. The parent/guardian/emergency contact will be told what happened, and will discuss with the coach and/or the swimmer what the swimmer's symptoms are. It is up to the parent/guardian/emergency contact to decide if the swimmer should return to practice or not. The swimmer has the option of resting for about 15 minutes, at which time the parent/guardian/emergency contact must make a decision regarding a return to practice. If the swimmer does not return to practice the swimmer must be picked up from the pool area as soon as possible. If the swimmer enters the locker room another swimmer or their parent/guardian should accompany them. Please note that coaches are not medical professionals and should not make a medical diagnosis.

Medications

- A swimmer who is taking prescription medication during the travel season will need to travel with their parent or guardian if there is not a parent chaperone willing to take responsibility for this swimmer. The parent or guardian of this swimmer will sign a release removing any responsibility from the chaperone related to the administration of the prescription medication.
- The coach reserves the right to ask a parent to be present at practices as deemed necessary.
- The coach reserves the right to exclude any swimmer from entrance to the pool, locker room, or any Heronettes event if it is deemed a matter of safety for all individuals involved

Financial Obligations and Fundraising

Funding for the Hamden Heronettes is primarily provided by the parents, working through the Parents' Association. Most expenditures are coaching salaries and registration fees for competitions used from funds generated from tuition. *We are fortunate that the Hamden Parks and Recreation Department contributes pool time and a monetary allocation—many teams have to pay for pool time!*

Tuition*

Swimmers will be assessed a yearly tuition based on the number of routines assigned to the swimmer. A payment schedule is determined in advance by the Board and tuition must be paid on time. If payment is not received according to schedule determined by the Board, the swimmer will not be allowed to swim at practice or in competition.

*Tuition does not cover a swimmer's cost for equipment, costumes, and travel expenses to away meets.

Fundraising

A variety of Individual, Cooperative and Club fundraising opportunities will be held during the season. Fundraisers can be used to defray any cost associated with the Heronettes such as fees, apparel, costumes, and/or travel.

There are 3 types of fundraisers and they are:

- a. Individual Fundraisers (such as Scrip) - 100% of profits are assigned to the swimmer account.
- b. Cooperative Fundraisers (such as items for purchase, i.e. coffee, chocolate, etc.) - Profits are divided with a set percentage going to the swimmer account and the remainder to the team. The first \$25 raised by each swimmer for Swim-a-thon will go to the team.
- c. Club Fundraisers (such as Coin Drive) - 100% of profits will support the team, often to offset coaches' travel

Note: Once the competitive season ends, all unused funds will remain in the swimmer's account.

Other Expenses (Team Travel)

- Regardless of which team your swimmer is on, team members share all expenses of the coach(es), which may include a "coaches' room" and/or a "coaches' car" as well as meal expenses.
- Other associated costs necessary for competition are determined by which team your swimmer is on and are shared by team members. These include the minimum number of vehicles, hotel rooms, and chaperones needed to accommodate the team. Also included is the cost of shared meals.
- Estimated Costs Sheets will be issued and must be paid in full two weeks before an away meet. Revisions will be made following the meet and, based on the actual costs; Revised Cost Sheets will reflect credits to the swimmer's account or additional money due.
- The cost of general travel associated with the team is outlined on pages 7-8.

Travel Policies, Procedures, and Expectations

OVERVIEW

- It is required that swimmers attend all meets.
- When traveling as a team, all swimmers will dress in identical attire, as directed by their coach.
- Volunteer chaperones must be available and willing to chaperone all travel, competition, and other events for their assigned group of swimmers for that particular meet.
- The entire team participates together in food arrangements, whether being assessed for purchased food or dining out. If dietary restrictions are anticipated to pose a problem, families should alert the coach and food parent as soon as possible.
- All activities, meals, sightseeing, etc. done as a team.

Intermediate and Age Group Team

- Team members are allowed to travel with their family. It is the responsibility of the family to ensure swimmers are on time for all events. Families must arrive at the hotel and pool at pre-determined times so as to not miss any part of a meet. Should a parent not be able to accompany their swimmer, it is that parent's responsibility (with assistance from the Team Mom) to make arrangements with another swimmer's family for transportation and chaperoning of their swimmer. If needed, there will always be a chaperone available to share a room with those swimmers whose family may not be able to attend the meet.
- The 1st Vice President of Travel will notify the Team Mom of hotel information. The Team Mom will disseminate the hotel information, including the date the rooms must be reserved by.

- Parents MUST stay at the pre-determined hotel. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure reservations are made timely and appropriately for meets.
- Team members are allowed to stay in hotel rooms with their family.
- If families want to travel together, families make those decisions.

Swimmer Behavior Guidelines for Meets

- Be polite, calm, quiet, cooperative and always prepared
- Observe curfews
- Be at the pool, breakfast area, car, etc. at the designated times fully prepared
- Treat the host pool/locker areas and hotel with respect, leaving them neat and clean
- Eat according to the schedule and the guidelines
- Cooperate with and be respectful of chaperones, coaches and officials
- Be respectful of other Heronettes and your competitors
- Bring and wear required uniforms and gear
- Stay with teammates in groups of at least two or three at all times
- Ask permission of chaperones, parent or coach before going anywhere
- For safety, keep interactions with strangers to a minimum
- Never invite anyone (other than teammates) to your hotel room
- Do not use phones, tablets, or computers at the meet venue or hotel without permission from a chaperone or coach.

General Travel Cost Guidelines

Fundraisers may be held during the year to help defray coaches' travel expenses, which otherwise are shared among teammates.

Cost of Lodging

- The First Vice-President makes all hotel reservations for the team, weighing cost, convenience, and available amenities to make the best decision for everyone involved.
- Each swimmer is responsible for the cost of their room in addition to the cost of a portion of the coaches' room.
- Coaches share a coaches' room together; coaches do not share rooms with swimmers.

Cost of Transportation

- The cost of driving to the meet (gas, tolls, etc.) is the responsibility of the parent. If a parent transports additional swimmers, it is up to the parent to discuss transportation costs with other parents.
- If traveling by air, train or bus, each swimmer is responsible for their own fare and an equal portion of the chaperones' (if applicable) and coaches' fares.
- Each swimmer is responsible for a portion of the cost of the coaches' car to the meet. The per mileage cost of the coaches' car is determined at the beginning of each season by the board based on the government standard.

Cost of Food

- At some meets a "food parent" might bring (or send) food in coolers "picnic-style" for lunch and snacks which are shared by swimmers, coaches, chaperones, and potentially parents at the meet venue. In this case the cost of the food will be divided evenly among the swimmers and parents that "eat from the cooler". The cost will be assessed to the swimmer's account. **Please notify the food parent of any food allergies prior to purchasing of food.**

- Teams may decide to purchase a healthy lunch at the concession stand or send someone out for sandwiches, etc. instead of bringing all the food to the venue. In this case swimmers and parents are responsible for paying for their own meals.
- If possible, breakfast is at the hotel, otherwise the team will decide whether the “food parent” or the swimmer’s parent will provide it.
- Meals not eaten at the venue may require additional funds for dining out or take out. In this case swimmers and parents are responsible for paying for their own meals. NOTE: Coaches’ meal expenses at restaurants are shared among swimmers.

Cost of Supplies

- The Team Parent will provide make up, in consultation with the coach, for each swimmer. She will also provide Knoxing supplies at away meets.
- There may be a separate assessment for these supplies, as requested by the Team Parent.
- If there is money not used by the food parent, the Team Parent may purchase supplies from those excess funds.

Parent Volunteers at Away Meets

The Hamden Heronettes could not function as a competitive team without the help of parent volunteers. The coaches depend on parents’ help and are very appreciative of the time and effort expended. Although the swimmers may not consciously appreciate parent volunteers, they are the reason parents step up to volunteer again and again. *Thank you in advance for volunteering!*

Overview of Volunteer Roles

Team Parent: Supplies Knox and makeup, extra gear, costumes, headpieces, and Team Bag. Cares for suits and headpieces following the meet and restocks Team Bag. May also serve as a chaperone.

Chaperone: Maintains her team’s schedule during the meet (while traveling, at the hotel, and at the venue.) Monitors their time at the venue, assists with costume changes, hair and makeup. (Because this position requires access to the locker room, it should be done by a female.)

Food Parent: (If one is appointed for a particular team or meet): Shops in advance for food to bring and eat at the venue for the swimmers and coaches, and potentially the parents.

Except for the Team Parent, volunteer responsibilities must be shared among all parents during the competitive season. The Team Parent usually serves in the position for the entire competitive season, but does not need to travel to every meet or serve as a Chaperone for every meet.

NOTE: Parent volunteers (including Team Parent) are NOT permitted on the pool deck at a meet venue.

SPECIFIC DUTIES OF VOLUNTEER POSITIONS

It is the policy of the Hamden Heronettes that all volunteers take and pass the Safe Sport course online.

Team Parent

A Team Parent volunteer is needed for each competitive team. This may be a shared position.

Responsibilities include:

- Storing Competition Suits and headpieces during the competitive season and cleaning them after each use. Make Swimsuit Coordinator aware of minor repairs that are needed. A Suit Care Contract which

includes directions for suit care will be given to each Team Parent. This must be read, signed and followed.

- Returning all suits to Swimsuit Coordinator at the end of the competitive season. Report any damaged or lost suits to the Swimsuit Coordinator.
- Working closely with Team Chaperones before and during each meet.
- Coordinating and maintaining supplies for the Team Bag. Records and alerts the Treasurer if a swimmer should be assessed for goggles, bathing caps, or nose plugs needed from the Team Bag at a meet.
- Implementing a phone tree/email list for team information and scheduling updates.
- Acting as a liaison between the team parents and coaches.

Chaperone

Chaperones must commit and devote their time to the swimmers through the meet. The chaperones are expected to stay at the meet venue with the swimmers. Responsibilities:

- Confirm that the swimmers are always supervised and that they use the buddy system when leaving the larger group.
- Know where the swimmers are at all times.
- Carrying the swimmers' Emergency Medical Forms while traveling.
- Enforce the bedtime, wake-up time and breakfast times designated by the coach.
- Monitor healthy snacking, eating, and hydration.
- Ensure that swimmers behave according to the Behavior Guidelines
- Check that all swimmers are wearing the uniform specified by the coach.
- Attend to health problems that arise such as illness or minor injuries utilizing supplies from the Team Bag or the meet venue.
- Make sure the swimmers' costumes are hung up after each swim and stored in their proper garment bags along with the headpieces. They are to follow the Suit Care protocol explained on the Suit Care Contract.
- Ensure swimmers are ready to "warm up" and swim in specified uniforms or costumes.
- Assist swimmers with costumes, Knoxing, headpieces and makeup according to the coaches' timeline and instructions.
- Encourage swimmers to be organized and careful of their belongings and costumes.
- Enforce the de-Knoxing prohibition of most venues.
- Assist with video recording Heronettes routines.
- Remind swimmers to inventory their belongings before leaving the meet venue. Help them check Lost and Found, if needed.
- The Chaperone's responsibility is to the swimmers. If a swimmers' sibling is traveling as well, that sibling must be in the care of another adult for the duration of the travel and meet.

Food Parent

It is important that swimmers are well fed and hydrated when at a meet. Each team's designated food parent oversees this for one- and two-day meets. Responsibilities:

- Coordinates the purchase of non-perishable items and food/beverages for the team cooler.
- Stocks the team cooler with healthy food, snacks, water, and juice for the swimmers. Adheres to a "no junk food/no soda" rule until the competitive events have concluded.
- Takes into account dietary restrictions and allergies.
- Reminds swimmers and volunteer adults to bring a refillable water bottle.
- Turns over receipts to the Treasurer within 10 days of returning.
- Provides food at the venue for swimmer. If parents want to eat from the team cooler, they must inform the food parent in advance and will be assessed a fee accordingly.

- Arranges take-out meals to be eaten at the hotel and determines the logistics of picking up food and eating together. Parents, swimmers, and coaches should all be fed with the take-out food. The cost of the food will be divided equally among Swimmers and parents.
- Researches possible dining out options for the team when traveling for more than one day.

The Hamden Heronettes own a couple of large coolers with wheels. Generally, the food items /cooler can be left unattended at the meet venue. Eating at the meet venue will be planned for individual swimmers according to their scheduled events and the coaches' timeline. If multiple HHC teams are at the same meet, they may share food from each other's cooler. Plans can be made in advance for healthy meals to be purchased at the venue's concession stand or for someone to bring take out to the venue instead of carrying everything in. Breakfast and dinners should be eaten together as a team whenever possible.

Suggested Food Items for the Team Cooler

Juice, milk	Hummus
Yogurts/yogurt tubes	Lettuce for salad or sandwiches
Fresh fruit	Deli meat, cut-up cooked chicken
Dried fruit	Whole grain bread, sandwich thins, flat bread
Cheese/string cheese	Cereal bars/granola bars
Cut up vegetables for dipping or salads	Peanut butter and jelly (if no allergies)

If there are allergies, one cooler should be kept tree and peanut-free, well-cleaned, and clearly labeled.

Note: If there is a meet that requires more than two days away the team attending can decide not to use a food parent. Instead, chaperones can plan together how the team will eat.

All Parents

- Before your swimmer leaves for an away meet, please review the "Behavior Guidelines" and discuss their importance.
- Remind swimmers that their public behavior and attitude are seen by others as characteristic of the Hamden Heronettes; when they are wearing their team uniform, they represent the team.
- Notify the Chaperone of any special circumstances for your swimmer, especially medical and dietary needs.
- Update your emergency medical information if it has changed.
- Following the meet, help your swimmer launder, organize, and repack the Heronettes uniform and gear so it's ready for the next meet.

Team Apparel, Equipment & Competition Swimsuits

Team Apparel and Equipment

Competitive swimmers are required to have Team Apparel as determined by the Head Coach. Team Apparel is the financial responsibility of the parents and is not included in the Fees. The design and style of the Team Apparel may change from year to year, depending on the availability from the manufacturers.

Note: Training team and Watershow class swimmers must have a solid black swimsuit for the Watershow.

Swimmer's Required Equipment List

Needed for practices:

- One-piece bathing suit (any color)
- Bathing cap (any color)
- Goggles (any color)

- Nose clips (at least 2 pairs) *
- Towel
- Water bottle
- Yoga mat/extra towel for floor work

Needed for Meets and traveling to Meets:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • Team jacket * | • Black flip flops |
| • Team shirt (white) * | • Solid black figure suit |
| • Black shorts | • Nose clips (at least 2 pairs) * |
| • Black Leggings | • Hair brush/ elastics |
| • Team swimsuit * | • Water bottle |
| • Team bathing cap * | • Extra towel (for Knoxing) |
| • White bathing cap | • Yoga mat/extra towel for floor work |
| • Team towel (optional) * | • Team Parka (optional) |
| • Team backpack * | |

* These items are ordered through the Apparel Coordinator and the expenses are added to the swimmer's assessment. It is requested that these Team-specific items not be used on a daily basis (going to school or practice.) It is costly to replace these items. Reserving them for meets and traveling will avoid the clothing and gear becoming lost or unusable.

A Team Makeup and Knox Box travels with each team and is maintained by the Team Parent. Each swimmer contributes financially to the team supplies.

Competition Suits

Competition suits are artistic costumes designed to reflect the character of the routine. These suits and coordinating headpieces are the financial responsibility of the parents and are not included in the tuition fees. All suits and headpiece designs are approved by the Head Coach.

Suits Purchased by HHC:

It is typical that each season HHC purchases made-to-order suits for the Age Group Team Swimmers through a custom suit maker and typically costs between \$150 and \$300. When HHC does purchase made-to-order suits, the first users of the suits rent those suits for that season and are charged 60% of the retail price. **Swimmers do not own these suits.** The Suit Coordinator will submit the rental cost information to the Treasurer. After the first season of use, the suits become part of the suit closet to be used in subsequent years. Subsequent swimmers who use these suits after the first season are charged a rental fee based on the original cost of the suit and the number of seasons it has been used. Swimmers will be charged the FULL cost for replacement of any lost or extremely damaged suit. (Normal wear and tear is to be expected.)

Suits Purchased by a Swimmer:

It is typical that Intermediate Team Swimmers purchase lower-cost suits (not made-to-order) suits each year. A lower-cost suit is purchased through a swim vendor and typically costs between \$50 and \$75 and becomes the property of the swimmer. The Suit Coordinator will submit the full cost of the suit to the Treasurer. Any Routine Suit purchased by an individual swimmer will be returned to them at the end of the competition season. At that time, the swimmer may decide to donate their suit to the Heronettes Suit Closet.

Suits Rented from the Heronettes' Suit Closet:

Suits are typically rented from the suit closet by Intermediate and Age Group swimmers who perform small routines (i.e. solo and duets). However, there can be exceptions to this practice based on coaches' decisions and team composition on a year-to-year basis. When suits are rented from the suit closet, swimmers are charged a rental fee based on the original cost of the suit and the number of seasons it has been used. The Suit Coordinator will submit the rental cost information to the Treasurer. All rented Competition Suits must be returned to the Heronettes Suit Closet in good and useable condition at the end of the competitive swim season. Any suit not returned in good condition will be billed, at full replacement value based on the original cost of the suit and the number of seasons it has been used, to the swimmer.

The Heronettes Suit Closet:

- Donations: All athletes are invited to submit Competition Suits that they have purchased in full to the Heronettes Suit Closet. Suits will be accepted if they are in good, useable condition.
- When a suit is admitted to the closet, it is housed in favorable conditions, under the care of the Suit Coordinator, in order to maintain its good condition.
- Swimmers will be charged the FULL cost for replacement of any lost or extremely damaged suit. (Normal wear and tear is to be expected.)
- Headpieces are always the property of the Heronettes Suit Closet; they may not be retained by an individual swimmer. All Headpieces must be returned to the Suit Closet in good and useable condition at the end of the competitive swim season.

Types of Clinics, Meets, and Competitions

Clinics

Clinics are specific sessions by "expert clinicians" designed to help swimmers learn new techniques and skills to improve their swimming. Clinics may be sponsored by the East Zone, the Heronettes, or USA Synchro. Travel and possible overnight stays will be needed for some clinics. Clinic sessions may be noted as Bronze, Silver or Gold according to the level of swimmer skills that will be addressed. Clinic attendance is not included in tuition fees; costs will be assessed at the time of the clinic.

Association, Regional, Zone and National Meets

Between January and June there are several competitive meets. The number of meets a swimmer will attend depends on the age group of the swimmer and how the swimmer places in early meets.

Some meets are "Invitational" and are excellent practice meets with no pre-qualification to attend. Some meets are "Qualifiers" intended to pare the routine field. Later in the season, teams and small routines may have to qualify to attend the next-level competitive meet.

- "Away meets" require travel arrangements and chaperones and often require an overnight stay at the venue. The Heronettes typically attend meets in New Canaan CT, the Boston MA area, and the Albany and Buffalo areas of NY. Sometimes regular season meets are also held in PA, NJ, DE, and/or MD.
- "Home Meets" are hosted by the Heronettes (typically one or two each season.) Hosting requires the help of many people. All families are required to participate by helping to run concessions, sell souvenirs, enter data into the computer, prepare food for our menu, assist adjudicators, etc. There are also "chaperones" identified to "oversee" the swimmers.
- East Zone Intermediate and 12&U AG Championships and 13/Over AG Opens" is an open qualification (you don't have to qualify) for Intermediate team routines, but Intermediate small routines must qualify to this meet. 12&U Age Group swimmers also have their East Zone Championships at this meet and must qualify for it, and attend even if they are attending JOs. This meet take place in early June. Held somewhere in the East Zone, it often requires two or more days' attendance.

- Junior Olympics (JOs) take place in late June/early July, concluding the regular competitive season. Only Age Group team, combo and small routines that have qualified by their excellent performance in a qualifying meet will attend. Junior Olympics is a multi-day event.
- Other National Championships: The Heronettes occasionally attend other national championships. These competitions are an opportunity that may be discussed for a swimmer or routine, and while participation is strongly encouraged, they are not obligatory events. The other US National Championships are the US 13/15 Age Group Championship, the US Junior Championship, the US Senior Championship, and US Opens.

Figure & Routine Competition

Each meet is broken into two sections: Figure Competition & Routine Competition. Swimmers who only compete in an Age Group Combo, 16/17 Age Group routine, 18/19 Age Group routine, or Junior routine do not do Figures. Except for Combo, these routines will instead perform a Technical Routine with compulsory figure elements. Swimmers are judged in each section and the scores are combined to give a final score.

- All swimmers are required to participate in the figure competition. Failure to do so will result in the swimmer being scratched from all the competitions.
- The final score for a solo routine is derived by adding the swimmer's figure and routine scores together for a final score.
- The final score for a duet or team routine is derived from the average figure score of each participant added to the routine score to create the final routine score.
- The final score of a combination (combo) routine is only the routine score, but figure competition MAY BE required for all combo routine entrants.

Awards are given for, at a minimum, places 1 – 8, for both figures and routines.

Figures Competition

Figures are compulsory movements performed individually in front of a panel of judges, who award combined points in the categories of Control and Design, according to the methods of grading in the Technical Rules section of the USSS Rules Handbook, section USSS OD 2.6.1. The Intermediate, 12&Under Age Group and 13/15 Age Group competition categories each have a different set of required figures, with the difficulty increasing with competitive category and age bracket. Intermediate figures are the same regardless of the age grouping of the swimmers. Four figures are judged at each meet. Two figures are compulsory for each group and will be judged at every meet in a season. The other two figures are chosen at random from two to three possible sets of two a few days before the meet. Figures are changed every FINA quad, or every four years. Swimmers are required to wear solid black bathing suits and white bathing caps for the Figure Competition.

Routine Competition

There are five types of routines: solo, duet, trio (Intermediates only), combination, and team. In the US combination routines may have 4-10 swimmers, and team routines may have 4-8 swimmers. Routines are performed to music and in costume. The routine choreography is designed to reflect the theme and/or mood of the music, and should also highlight both the melody and non-melodic parts of the music. Routine length varies, depending on competition category and routine type, but in general the more swimmers and the older/more difficult the competition category, the longer the routine is.

All Age Groups have Free routines, meaning there are no restrictions or requirements on the types of moves within the routine. Intermediate routines are Free routines with required elements, like figures, to perform within the routine. The 16/17 and 18/19 Age Group solos, duets and team routines must also perform a Technical routine, in the place of Figure competition. These routines have figures, movements and sometimes lifts that are required within the routine. The rest of the Technical routine must be performed by all the swimmers identically and facing in the same direction.

For information on how Free and Technical routines are scored, please see USSS OD 2.6.2

Zone, Region, and Association Divisions

These are geographic divisions, used to limit the number of clubs we compete against early in each competitive track. As routines qualify and progress through the competition tracks, the number of competitor clubs increases.

Association: For the Heronettes, this is the Connecticut (CT) Association. Currently the only two clubs in the CT Association are the New Canaan Aquianas and the Hamden Heronettes.

Region: The CT Association is a part of Region A, which includes also includes the Adirondack Association, which includes three clubs, and is located in upstate New York.

Zone: Our zone is the East Zone, which has four Regions and currently consists of 29 clubs which compete in Age Group, 13/15, Junior and Senior tracks. Including Masters and Collegiate clubs, there are a total of 38 clubs in the East Zone.

National: All of the clubs which are members of USA Synchro. There are four zones in the US, North, South, East and West, and hundreds of clubs.

Competition Tracks

In synchronized swimming, there are specific groupings based on the skill level of the swimmer. For swimmers with only clinic experience, or have developing skills, swimmers will swim at the Intermediate Level. For swimmers with multiple years of experience, they will swim at the Age Group Level.

Groupings

Intermediates: 10 & under, 11/12, 13/15 and 16 & Over

Age Groups: 12 & under, 13/15, 16/17, 18/19

Age Groupings are determined by year of birth, and is based on the age of the swimmer at the end of the calendar year during the competitive season. For example, in September, when the season starts, if a swimmer is 12, but will turn 13 in March of the upcoming year, they compete in the 13/15 Intermediate or 13/15 Age Group groupings, whichever is appropriate based on their skill level.

A swimmer may be entered in more than one group during a season. For example, an 11-year old with excellent skills may "swim up" in the 13/15 Age Group team routine and also swim a solo in the 12&U Age Group field.

Intermediate and Age Group Track: Competitors are divided into the age groupings shown above. Within each Intermediate and Age Group division, there are solo, duet and team routine competitions. Intermediates also have trio competition. Age Groups 13/15, 16/17 and 18/19 (combined into 16/19 for this event only) also have combination routines. Competition starts at the CT Association meet, where top three in each division and routine qualify for the Region A competition. Top three places in the Region A competition in duet and team, and the top two places in solo, qualify for US Junior Olympics.

13/15 Track: All competitors must be 13 to 15 years old by the end of the calendar year. Starts at the CT Association 13/15 competition, top three places qualify for the East Zone 13/15 Championships. Top placing routines (minimum of top 4, may be more in some years) qualify for the US 13/15 National Championships. Combo routines have no qualification requirement for any competition; entries are open.

Junior Track: All solo, duet and team routine competitors must be 15-18 years old by the end of the competitive calendar year. Combos may include 13-14-year-old swimmers. The season starts at the CT Association Junior competition, with no qualification requirements for the East Zone Junior Championships. Top placing routines (minimum of 6, may be more in some years) qualify for the US Junior National Championships. Combo routines have no qualification requirement for any competition; entries are open.

Senior Track: All solo, duet and team routine competitors must be at least 15 years old by the end of the calendar year. Combos may include 13-14-year-old swimmers. In Senior competition, there is no Figure Competition, instead there are Technical Routines in addition to the usual Free Routines. (Example, a duet would compete in the Duet Free Routine competition and the Duet Technical Routine competition.) The season starts at the CT Association Senior competition with no qualification requirements for the East Zone Senior Championships. Top placing routines (minimum of 4, may be more in some years) qualify for the US Senior National Championships. Combo routines have no qualification requirement for any competition; entries are open.

Grade Levels

The Grade Level Program is designed to monitor the skill development of the athletes and coaches. The program offers an analytical approach to provide educational opportunities in areas we may be weak. As of 2018 USA Synchro offers 5 grade levels. Other levels will be gradually implemented year to year. Each level is targeted for a specific age and skill ability to compete at multiple competition levels. Only Levels 1&2 are required for National Junior Olympics.

General Information

- A swimmer may complete as many grades as they want or need per year.
- Athletes must pass a grade level before being able to move up to the next one.
- Grade level evaluations are done at a club or association level event.
- An athlete can go to another club or another association to enter a grade level competition.
- The Grade Level Manual can be found in the Members Only section of the USA Synchro website.
- An athlete may retake a level as many times as needed.
- Grade level certifications never expire.
- All athletes must pass Levels 1-5 to compete at US Jr/Sr Nationals.
- All athletes must pass Levels 1-4 to compete at US 13-15 Nationals.
- All athletes must pass Levels 1 & 2 to compete at National J.O. Championships.

SafeSport

Goal

Hamden Heronettes Club (HHC) Athlete Protection Policy is to follow the U.S. Center for SafeSport policy which is “committed to building a sport community where participants can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of emotional, physical, and sexual misconduct.”

SafeSport Training will be required of but not limited to all coaches, board members, chaperones, managers, C.I.T.s (coach in training), judges, volunteers, support staff, and adults traveling with the team. HHC may require SafeSport training of anyone interacting with the team at their discretion.

All of the SafeSport policies listed below shall apply to: All adults who are either partially or fully under the jurisdiction of HHC, including parents and guardians of swimmers; any adult authorized by HHC to have regular contact with or authority over our swimmers; and all adult staff and board members of HHC. (Collectively “Applicable Adult” for the purposes of these policies.)

1) One-on-One Interactions, including meetings and individual training sessions

- a) One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility partially or fully under our jurisdiction are permitted if they occur at an observable and interruptible distance by another adult.
- b) One-on-one interactions between minor athletes and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) at a facility partially or fully under our jurisdiction are prohibited, except in the circumstances described in subpart 3d of this section and under emergency circumstances.
- c) Meetings between Applicable Adults and minor athletes at a facility partially or fully under our jurisdiction may only occur if another adult is present, except under emergency circumstances. Such meetings must occur where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult.
- d) If a one-on-one meeting takes place in an office at a facility partially or fully under our jurisdiction, the door to the office must remain unlocked and open. If available, it will occur in an office that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.
- e) Individual training sessions between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. It is the responsibility of the Applicable Adult to obtain the written permission of the minor's legal guardian in advance of the individual training session if the individual training session is not observable and interruptible by another adult. Permission for individual training sessions must be obtained at least every six months. Parents, guardians, and other caretakers must be allowed to observe the training session.
- f) When one-on-one interactions between Applicable Adults and minor athletes occur at a facility partially or fully under our jurisdiction, Applicable Adults will monitor these interactions. Monitoring includes: knowing that the one-on-one interaction is occurring, the approximate planned duration of the interaction, and randomly dropping in on the one-on-one.
- g) Applicable Adults are prohibited from interacting one-on-one with unrelated minor athletes in settings outside of the program that are not observable and interruptible (including, but not limited to, one's home and individual transportation), unless parent/legal guardian consent is provided for each out-of-program contact. Nonetheless, such arrangements are strongly discouraged.

2) Massages and rubdowns/athletic training modalities: No massages or rubdown/athletic training modalities may be performed between an Applicable Adult and a swimmer.

3) Locker rooms and changing areas

- a) Non-exclusive facility: If our organization uses a facility not fully under our jurisdiction (for, e.g., training or competition or similar events) and the facility is used by multiple constituents, Applicable Adults are nonetheless required to adhere to the rules set forth herein.
- b) Use of recording devices: Use of any device's (including a cell phone's) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces at a facility under our organization's jurisdiction is prohibited. Exceptions may be made for media and championship celebrations, provided that such exceptions are approved by the Covered Organization and two or more Applicable Adults are present.
- c) Under no circumstances shall an unrelated Applicable Adult at a facility under our organization's jurisdiction intentionally expose his or her breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals to a minor athlete.
- d) One-on-one interactions: Except for athletes on the same team, at no time are unrelated Applicable Adults permitted to be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area when at a facility under our partial or full jurisdiction, except under emergency circumstances. If our organization is using a facility that only has a single locker room or changing area, we will designate separate times for use by Applicable Adults, if any.
- e) Our organization regularly and randomly monitors the use of locker rooms and changing areas at facilities under our jurisdiction to ensure compliance with these policies. This will be done by two Applicable Adults or other teammates.
- f) Applicable Adults make every effort to recognize when a minor athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition and, if they do not return in a timely fashion, will check on the minor athlete's whereabouts.

4) Social media and electronic communications

- a) All electronic communication originating from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.
 - b) Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), another Applicable Adult or the minor's legal guardian will be copied. If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, said Applicable Adult should respond to the minor athlete with a copy to another Applicable Adult or the minor's legal guardian. When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult will copy another adult. Minor athletes may "friend" the organization's official page.
 - c) Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by the organization or by the Applicable Adults subject to this policy. The organization will abide by any such request that their minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, absent emergency circumstances.
 - d) HHC monitors its social media pages and removes any posts that violate our policies and practices for appropriate behavior. HHC will inform the legal guardian of a minor athlete of any prohibited posts, as well as the head coach.
 - e) Prohibited electronic communications: Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes and such Applicable Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from amateur athletes who are minors, unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact vs. regular contact. Existing social media connections on personal pages with minor athletes should be discontinued.
- 5) Local travel:** Local travel consists of travel to training, practice, and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).
- a) Transportation: Applicable Adults who are not also acting as a legal guardian, shall not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances, and must have at least two minor athletes or another adult at all times, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's parent/legal guardian in advance of each local travel.
 - b) We encourage parents/legal guardians to pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.
- 6) Team travel:** Team travel is travel to a competition or other team activity that the organization plans and supervises.
- a) When only one Applicable Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete must have his/her legal guardian's written permission in advance and for each competition to travel alone with said Applicable Adult.
 - b) Applicable Adults shall not share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with a minor athlete (unless the Applicable Adult is the legal guardian, sibling, or is otherwise related to the minor athlete). However, a parent/legal guardian may consent to such an arrangement in advance and in writing. Furthermore, a parent/legal guardian may consent in advance and in writing to the minor athlete sharing a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with an adult athlete.
 - c) Meetings shall be conducted consistent with the organization's policy for one-on-one interactions (i.e., any such meeting shall be observable and interruptible).
 - d) Team travel policies must be signed and agreed to by all minor athletes, parents, and Applicable Adults traveling with the organization.

Other Policies

As per USA Synchro regulations all coaches need to submit to a background check.

Any suspected criminal behavior must be immediately reported to the police.

Any inappropriate behavior must be reported to any board member.

These Policies were developed to protect all swimmers/athletes and Applicable Adults of the HHC. Compliance is mandatory for all involved in the HHC organization.

