



PARENT HANDBOOK

MCMINN UNITED MAKOS

JR. MAKOS

AUGUST 2026

ATHENS-MCMINN FAMILY YMCA



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WELCOME & PROGRAM INFORMATION

WELCOME TO THE TEAM

Welcome to the Athens-McMinn Family YMCA's school year swim teams: McMinn United Makos and Jr. Makos programs! We are excited to have you on board! This handbook will serve as a reference for you as a member of our program and is a resource for you to find information regarding our philosophy, structure, and policies.

While this handbook contains a large amount of information, there will inevitably be questions not answered within its pages. Please contact our Swim Team Coordinator and/or Head Coach if you have a question concerning the program.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The Athens-McMinn Family YMCA is committed to providing a positive, safe, and supportive environment where swimmers can develop their swimming skills, build confidence, practice good sportsmanship, and enjoy being part of a team. Our program emphasizes personal growth, teamwork, and character development while promoting the YMCA's core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Katy Coffey & Tabbitha Lake

Swim Team Coordinator & Head Coach

Email: katy@athensmcminnymca.org

Phone: (423) 745-4904

We encourage families to reach out with questions, concerns, or feedback throughout the season. Open communication helps us create the best possible experience for every swimmer and family.

YMCA MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

MEMBERSHIP TYPES

There are several Athens-McMinn Family YMCA membership options available. Becoming a YMCA member of our location will give you a discounted program fee rate.

- **Family Membership:** Includes everyone living in your household.
- **Jr. Family Membership:** Includes one parent/guardian and their dependent child(ren) up to age 22.
- **Youth Membership:** Includes youth ages 12-18. Age restrictions apply in certain areas (for example, members must be at least 15 years old to use the wellness floor without a parent/guardian present).

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

JR. MAKOS TRY OUTS

Before the season starts for Jr. Makos ages 8-11, try outs will be held with limited spots for the school year team. These dates will be shared on the team website at

<https://www.athensmcminnymca.org/programs/aquatics/swim-team>



NEW & RETURNING SWIMMERS

New & returning swimmers must re-register for the program at the beginning of each season. All registrations will be processed on a first come first served basis. Swimmers must have knowledge of the four competitive strokes to join the team.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Registration can be completed in one of the following ways:

- Online at <https://www.athensmcminnymca.org/programs/aquatics/swim-team>
- At the Welcome Center of the Athens-McMinn Family YMCA
- Contact our Swim Team Coordinator at katy@athensmcminnymca.org to help facilitate your registration

PRACTICE GROUP CAPACITY

To provide high-quality practices and low swimmer to coach ratios:

- Each practice group has a maximum capacity. Registrations will be processed and approved on a first come first served basis.
- Once a practice group has reached capacity, registering swimmers will be placed on a waitlist until a spot in the group becomes available.
- Waitlist orders will be determined on a first come first served basis.
- If a swimmer is not ready for the level of swimming in school year swim league, the Head Coach and Swim Team Coordinator will reach out to the parent/guardian.

PROGRAM FEES & BILLING

REGISTRATION FEE

The registration fee covers administrative costs associated with enrollment.

PROGRAM FEES & BILLING

- Program fees are available at either the YMCA Member rate or the Program Participant rate.
- Current program fees are listed on the School Year Swim Team webpage.
- School Year Swim Team is a four-month seasonal program with a possible fifth month if a swimmer makes post-season swim meets in February.
- Program fees are billed through your YMCA account and drafted on the Friday before the month of programming.
- Program fees do not include YMCA membership or any additional activities, events, or offerings unless otherwise noted.

SWIM MEET FEES

Meet fees will be discussed and sent out to parent/guardians as meets are scheduled. Home swim meets at the YMCA do not include a fee per Mako swimmer.

- Away swim meets will include swim meet fees per that organization's policies.

PAYMENT POLICIES

- The registration fee is due at the time of enrollment.
- Program fees will be drafted according to the billing schedule outlined above.



- Accounts with past-due balances may result in a participant's removal from the program.
- The YMCA does not offer payment plans for past-due balances.
- Re-enrollment following removal or withdrawal is subject to program availability and is not guaranteed.

CANCELLATION & REFUND POLICY

McMinn United Makos & Jr. Makos is a seasonal program that requires a commitment for the full season.

- Program fees are non-refundable.
- Participants are responsible for the full season fee upon registration, regardless of attendance or withdrawal from the program.
- Withdrawal from the program does not release participants from remaining program fees.
- Cancelling participation in McMinn United Makos or Jr. Makos does not cancel a YMCA membership. YMCA memberships must be cancelled separately through the Membership Department in accordance with YMCA membership policies.

Families experiencing extenuating circumstances are encouraged to contact the Swim Team Coordinator.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The Athens-McMinn Family YMCA believes that every child should have the opportunity to participate in programs that promote youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. No one is denied participation due to inability to pay.

Financial assistance is available to qualifying individuals and families to help offset the cost of YMCA memberships and programs.

Families interested in applying for financial assistance should contact the YMCA or visit our website for application information and eligibility requirements. For more information, please visit www.athensmcminnymca.org or contact the Welcome Center.

COMMUNICATION

We are committed to maintaining open and timely communication with our swimmers and families. Clear and timely communication helps ensure a positive experience for swimmers, families, coaches, and staff. Families are encouraged to regularly review team communications and stay informed throughout the season.

TEAM COMMUNICATION PLATFORM

The Athens-McMinn Family YMCA swim team program uses Slack as its primary communication platform.

- An invitation to join Slack will be sent to the email address provided during registration.
- Slack is used to communicate team announcements, schedules, practice, and meet updates, weather-related changes, volunteer opportunities, and other important information.



- Families are encouraged to regularly monitor Slack for schedules, weather-related updates, meet information, and team announcements.

COACH CONTACT INFORMATION

- Katy Coffey, Swim Team Coordinator
Email: katy@athensmcminnymca.org
Phone: (423)745-4904
- Tabbitha Lake, Head Coach
Phone: (423)745-4904

QUESTIONS, CONCERNS & GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

We value open communication and encourage families to share questions, concerns, or feedback as they arise. Our goal is to address concerns promptly and work together to provide the best possible experience for every swimmer.

If you have a concern regarding the swim team program, please follow these steps:

1. **Contact the Swim Team Coordinator and Head Coach** to discuss the concern and seek resolution.
 - Email: katy@athensmcminnymca.org
 - Phone: (423) 745-4904
2. **If the concern is not resolved**, please contact the Aquatics Coordinator, Melissa Climer at melissa@athensmcminnymca.org or (423)745-4904.
3. **All concerns will be handled respectfully and confidentially** to the extent possible. Retaliation against any swimmer, parent, guardian, volunteer, or staff member for raising a concern in good faith will not be tolerated.

We are committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and positive environment for all participants and families. Information regarding the YMCA's formal grievance procedure can be found on the YMCA website at: www.athensmcminnymca.org/aboutus/contactus.

SCHEDULE CHANGES & FACILITY CLOSURES

The safety of our swimmers, families, staff, and volunteers is our top priority. Occasionally, practices or swim meets may be modified, delayed, or canceled due to weather conditions, facility issues, or other unforeseen circumstances.

COMMUNICATION OF SCHEDULE CHANGES

The YMCA swim team staff will communicate schedule changes as quickly as possible through the team's primary communication platform, Slack.

Families are encouraged to regularly monitor Slack for updates regarding:

- Practice cancellations
- Swim meet cancellations
- Delayed start times
- Early dismissals
- Facility closures
- Weather-related updates



PRACTICE CHANGES

Practices may be delayed, modified, or canceled due to:

- Lightning or thunder in the area
- Pool chemical imbalances
- Mechanical or equipment failures
- Water clarity concerns
- Pool contamination
- Other facility or safety-related issues

If practice is canceled after swimmers have arrived, parents/guardians will be notified and asked to pick up their swimmer. A YMCA staff member or coach will remain on-site until all swimmers have been picked up.

SWIM MEET CHANGES

Swim meets may be delayed, modified, postponed, or cancelled due to:

- Weather conditions
- Facility closures
- Pool contamination
- Mechanical or operational issues
- Other facility or safety-related issues

Information regarding meet changes will be communicated through Slack as soon as it becomes available.

LIGHTNING & THUNDER POLICY

Practices, swim meets, and other aquatic activities will be suspended immediately when lightning is observed or thunder is heard. Activities may resume only after 30 minutes have passed since the last observed lightning strike or sound of thunder. Additional lightning or thunder will restart the 30-minute waiting period.

TEAM EXPECTATIONS

YMCA VALUES

The Athens-McMinn Family YMCA swim team is built on the YMCA's core values of Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. We strive to create a positive environment where swimmers can develop skills, build confidence, and enjoy being part of a team.

All swimmers, parents, and coaches play an important role in creating a successful season.

SWIMMER EXPECTATIONS

Swimmers are expected to:

- Demonstrate respect for coaches, teammates, officials, volunteers, and YMCA staff.
- Arrive on time and prepared for practices and team activities.
- Follow coach instructions and maintain a positive attitude.
- Exhibit good sportsmanship both in and out of the pool.
- Represent themselves, their families, and the YMCA in a positive manner.



PARENT & FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

Parents and guardians are expected to:

- Support their swimmer's commitment to the team.
- Ensure swimmers arrive on time and are picked up promptly after practice.
- Communicate questions or concerns respectfully and directly with coaching staff.
- Encourage and support swimmers without coaching from the sidelines.
- Help create a positive environment for all participants and families.

COACH COMMITMENTS

Coaches are committed to:

- Providing a safe, positive, and supportive environment.
- Teaching proper swimming technique and sportsmanship.
- Communicating program information and expectations clearly.
- Treating all swimmers with fairness, respect, and encouragement.

FAILURE TO MEET TEAM EXPECTATIONS

The Athens-McMinn Family YMCA is committed to providing a safe, positive, and supportive environment for all participants. When team expectations are not met, YMCA staff will address concerns in a manner appropriate to the situation.

Consequences may include:

- Verbal reminders or redirection
- Discussions with the swimmer
- Communication with parents or guardians
- Temporary removal from a practice, meet, or team activity
- Suspension from program participation
- Dismissal from the program

The YMCA reserves the right to determine appropriate corrective action based on the nature, severity, and frequency of the behavior.

Behaviors that are unsafe, disruptive, aggressive, or inconsistent with YMCA values may result in immediate suspension or dismissal from the program. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Repeated failure to follow team expectations, program rules, or coach instructions
- Behavior that endangers the safety or well-being of others
- Violations of YMCA policies
- Conduct by a swimmer or parent/guardian that negatively impacts the team environment
- Failure to maintain a current account balance in accordance with program payment policies
- Repeated late pick-ups following practices, meets, or team activities

PRACTICES

PRACTICE PHILOSOPHY

Consistent attendance is one of the most important factors in a swimmer's development.



Regular participation helps swimmers build skills, improve conditioning, gain confidence, and contribute to the success of the team.

PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

To help create a safe and productive training environment:

- Swimmers should arrive on time and remain for the entire practice session.
- If a swimmer must arrive late or leave early, parents should notify the coach before practice begins.
- Families are encouraged to notify the coaching staff when a swimmer will be absent from practice.
- Swimmers should arrive prepared with the appropriate swim attire and required equipment.
- Swimmers should be on the pool deck or designated dryland area at least 10 minutes before practice begins.
- Important announcements and coaching instruction are often provided at the beginning of practice.
- Practices typically begin with a warm-up or dryland session designed to improve strength, flexibility, and injury prevention.
- Swimmers are expected to follow coach instructions, demonstrate good sportsmanship, and contribute to a positive team environment.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

Swimmers should bring the following items to every practice:

- **Female swimmers:** One-piece swimsuit
- **Male swimmers:** Jammers
- Goggles (no face-mask goggles)
- Towel
- Water bottle with a secure lid (glass containers are prohibited)
- Practice swim cap
- Fins, pull buoy, and a kickboard

Each swimmer can purchase a Mako swim cap for meets at the Welcome Center.

PARENT OBSERVATION GUIDELINES

Parents and guardians are welcome to observe practice. To ensure swimmers receive the full benefit of instruction:

- Please allow coaches to maintain swimmers' attention during practice.
- Parents should not interrupt coaches while they are actively coaching.
- Questions or concerns should be addressed before or after practice, or through established communication channels.
- Please refrain from coaching your swimmer from the sidelines. Coaches often use drills and teaching techniques that may appear unusual but are designed to develop proper stroke mechanics and swimming skills.

SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

For the safety of all participants:



- Swimmers ages 10 and under must have a parent or guardian present on the pool deck.
- Swimmers age 11 must have a parent or guardian remain in the facility.
- Swimmers ages 12 and older may be dropped off and picked up for practice

Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring swimmers are picked up promptly at the conclusion of practice.

SWIM MEETS

Swim meets provide swimmers with an opportunity to apply the skills they practice, measure their progress, experience healthy competition, and support their teammates. Our goal is for every swimmer to have a positive and rewarding meet experience.

AGE GROUP DESIGNATIONS

YMCA school year swim meets are organized by middle school or high school age, overseen by the governing bodies of KISL (Knox-area Interscholastic Swim League) and Tennessee Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association (TISCA). Swimmers compete in the age group determined by league guidelines.

MEET EXPECTATIONS

To help ensure a smooth meet experience:

- Swimmers should arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time.
- Swimmers should check in with their coach upon arrival.
- Swimmers should remain with the team unless excused by a coach or parent/guardian.
- Swimmers are expected to demonstrate good sportsmanship and represent the YMCA positively.
- Families should notify the Head Coach as soon as possible if a swimmer will be unable to attend a scheduled swim meet. Advance notice assists coaches with event entries, relay assignments, and meet planning.

COACH EVENT SELECTION

Coaches determine event assignments based on swimmer development, team needs, and meet objectives.

While coaches may discuss event selections with swimmers and parents, final decisions regarding event participation rest with the coaching staff.

If you have questions regarding event assignments, please speak with the Head Coach.

RELAY PARTICIPATION

Relays are an important part of the swim team experience and help build teamwork and team spirit.

- Relay teams are selected by the coaching staff.
- Swimmers are expected to participate in relays when assigned.
- Relay participation is based on team needs, swimmer development, and meet strategy.



PARENT & SPECTATOR EXPECTATIONS

Parents, family members, and spectators play an important role in creating a positive meet environment. We encourage families to:

- Cheer for all swimmers
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship
- Support coaches, officials, volunteers, and athletes
- Direct questions or concerns to coaches at an appropriate time

Parents should avoid coaching swimmers during meets and allow coaches to provide instruction and feedback.

MEET RESULTS & RECOGNITION

Swim meets provide an opportunity for swimmers to celebrate personal improvement, teamwork, and achievement. Success is measured not only by results, but also by effort, sportsmanship, and personal growth throughout the season.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT & VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Parent volunteers are essential to the successful operation of swim meets. Many meet functions including timing, scoring, and event administration, rely on volunteer support. Families are encouraged to participate throughout the season to help create a positive experience for all swimmers.

If volunteer roles are unfilled at any time during a swim meet, the meet will be temporarily halted until the necessary positions are filled. The YMCA will provide all required supplies and instructions.

Volunteer assignments will be made with sensitivity to comfort levels and training. No parent will be asked to perform a role they are not trained for or feel unprepared to handle.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

Parent volunteers help support the operation of swim meets and contribute to a positive experience for all swimmers and families.

Volunteer roles are limited to meet operations and are performed under the supervision of YMCA staff. Volunteer opportunities do not involve one-on-one interaction, supervision, or instruction of swimmers.

Volunteers are expected to follow all YMCA policies, procedures, and staff directions while serving in a volunteer role.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Timers

Timers record swimmers' race times in an assigned lane using stopwatches provided by the YMCA. This position is easy to learn and keep volunteers close to the action.

Runners

Runners collect timing cards and deliver them to the scorekeeping area throughout the



meet.

Stroke/Turn Judges

Stroke/turn judges are certified through KISL (the organization overseeing middle school and high school swimming) and enforce official competitive stroke rules.

Starter/Referee

The starter/referee is certified through KISL and starts each race after announcing the event and heat. The referee enforces the rules and regulations of the swim meet, including upholding stroke/turn judge calls.

Scorekeepers

Scorekeepers assist with recording meet results and team scores. Instructions and materials will be provided.

SUPPORTING THE TEAM

Volunteering is a great way to support the swim team, connect with other families, and contribute to a positive meet experience for all participants.

Volunteer opportunities will be communicated throughout the season, and families are encouraged to participate whenever possible.

ATHLETE SAFETY

The safety and well-being of our swimmers is our highest priority. The Athens-McMinn Family YMCA is committed to providing a safe, secure, and positive environment for all participants, families, staff, and volunteers.

FACILITY ACCESS & SECURITY

To help maintain a safe environment for all participants:

- All swimmers, family members, and guests must enter and exit through the YMCA's main entrance.
- All visitors are required to check in at the Welcome Center upon arrival.
- Emergency exits should only be used in the event of an emergency.
- Exit doors and locker room doors should not be left propped open.
- Parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring their swimmer is picked up promptly at the conclusion of practices, meets, and team activities.

RESTROOM PROCEDURES

Swimmers are strongly encouraged to use the restroom **before** swim practice starts.

If a swimmer must use the restroom during practice:

- The swimmer must notify a coach or YMCA staff members before leaving the pool area.
- Swimmers should return promptly after using the restroom.

LOCKER ROOM & CHANGING AREAS

The YMCA is committed to providing safe and respectful changing areas for all



participants.

- Swimmers must use designated locker rooms or changing areas when changing into or out of swimsuits.
- Changing on the pool deck is prohibited.
- Horseplay, inappropriate behavior, and disruptive conduct are not permitted in locker rooms or changing areas.
- YMCA staff may periodically monitor locker rooms and changing areas in accordance with YMCA policies and abuse prevention standards.

MEDICAL EMERGENCIES

In the event of an injury, illness, or emergency, YMCA staff will provide appropriate care and contact a parent or guardian as necessary. Emergency contact information provided during registration must remain current throughout the season.

MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY (MAAPP)

The Athens-McMinn Family YMCA is committed to providing a safe, positive, and abuse-free environment for all participants. We maintain a zero-tolerance policy for abuse, misconduct, bullying, harassment, and inappropriate interactions involving athletes. Creating a safe environment is a shared responsibility among YMCA staff, coaches, volunteers, athletes, and families.

COACH SCREENING & TRAINING

All swim team coaches and staff members undergo required screening and training before working with athletes, including:

- National, state, and local background checks
- Child abuse prevention training
- YMCA-required safety and protection training
- Ongoing compliance with YMCA and applicable state requirements

REPORTING CONCERNS

The YMCA encourages the immediate reporting of any suspected abuse, misconduct, policy violation, or athlete safety concern.

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911.

Concerns regarding a YMCA staff member, volunteer, or participant may be reported to:

- A YMCA Director
- The Praesidium Anonymous Helpline: 1-855-347-0751
- The YMCA's confidential online reporting form
- Tennessee Child Protective Services

You do not need proof of abuse to make a report. Reasonable suspicion is sufficient.

ATHLETE PROTECTION STANDARDS

The following standards apply to all swim team activities:

- Coach-athlete interactions must be observable and interruptible.



- Physical contact should be limited to instruction, safety, or encouragement and must occur in open view of others.
- One-on-one meetings between coaches and athletes are prohibited unless observable and interruptible.
- Bullying, harassment, hazing, and inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated.
- Photography and video recording are prohibited in locker rooms and changing areas.
- Horseplay is prohibited in locker rooms and changing areas.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION & SOCIAL MEDIA

Communication between coaches and athletes must be professional, program-related, and conducted through approved communication channels whenever possible.

- Parents should be included in individual communications involving minor athletes.
- Coaches and athletes may not engage in private social media interactions.
- Vulgar, bullying, threatening, or inappropriate communication is prohibited.
- Personal information, photos, or videos of team members should not be shared without consent.

Additional MAAPP policies and reporting procedures are available on the Athens-McMinn Family YMCA website.