



NWAL Return To Competition 2021

Recommendations for the
2021 Swim Season



CDC Guidelines

“The CDC is not aware of any scientific reports of the virus that causes COVID-19 spreading to people through the water in pools, hot tubs, water playgrounds, or other treated aquatic venues”.

The CDC recommends the following for attending sporting events such as swimming:

- Wearing PPE (face masks)
- Social distancing (keep 6ft apart)
- Enhanced hygiene / sanitation

NWAL recommendations are directly based upon the above proactive measures which are in turn customized to apply to the summer league swimming environment, as well as deemed sufficiently practical to be adopted by NWAL teams.



1. COVID-19 Disclaimer

- Membership of each team is required to acknowledge the COVID-19 Disclaimer as a part of their registration process. Disclaimer will be available in boiler-plate form for your team to use.
 - Acknowledges that there are no guarantees that NWAL nor your swim team can completely prevent you and / or your children from becoming exposed to COVID-19.
 - Acknowledges that your team membership accepts that an inherent risk of exposure to COVID-19 exists in any public place where people are present.
 - Attests that your team members' participation in any NWAL activity is voluntary and that your team members assume all risks regarding COVID-19 and releases NWAL and your team from any and all liability with respect to COVID-19, now and going forward.



2. Self-Screen

Prior to coming to the pool for any NWAL activity, everyone (swimmers, parents, guardians, volunteers....anyone) should self-screen by answering the following questions. If you answered YES to ANY question below, you should not come to the pool.

- *Do I feel sick in any way, dizzy, have a cough, have shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?*
- *Do I have a fever, sore throat, chills, headache, loss of taste or smell or diarrhea?*
- *Have I been in close contact with anyone known to have tested positive for COVID-19?*



3. COVID-19 Points of Contact

- Recommended that each team assign a COVID-19 point of contact (POC) volunteer.
 - COVID-19 POC role:
 - Keep current with all prevailing (CDC, state, county etc.) recommendations with regards to COVID-19.
 - Ensure that your team is following all COVID-19 modifications that your team has prescribed.
 - Be POC for your team's membership for questions and concerns related to COVID-19.
 - Liaise with other teams POC in your division to harmonize specifics regarding COVID-19 practices at dual meets.
 - Liaise with NWAL COVID-19 POC (to be determined).

4. Swim Practice:

➤ PPE

- Masks to be worn by all coaches and volunteers during practices
- Masks to be worn by all swimmers when not in the water or conducting dryland exercises

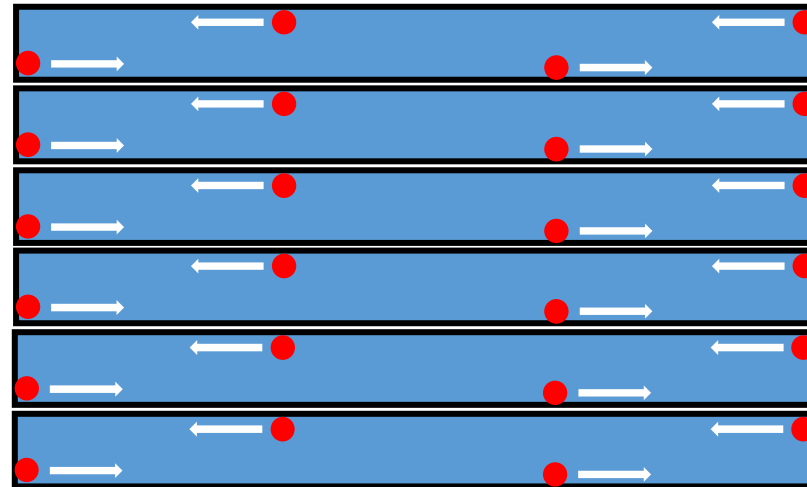
➤ Practice Group Size Determination

- Current swimming best practice of 4 swimmers per lane
- For a 25 yd, 5 lane pool, that would be a practice group size of no more than 20
- For a 25 yd, 6 lane pool, that would be a practice group size of no more than 24
- For a 25 yd, 8 lane pool, that would be a practice group size of no more than 32

4. Swim Practice:

➤ Basic Drills

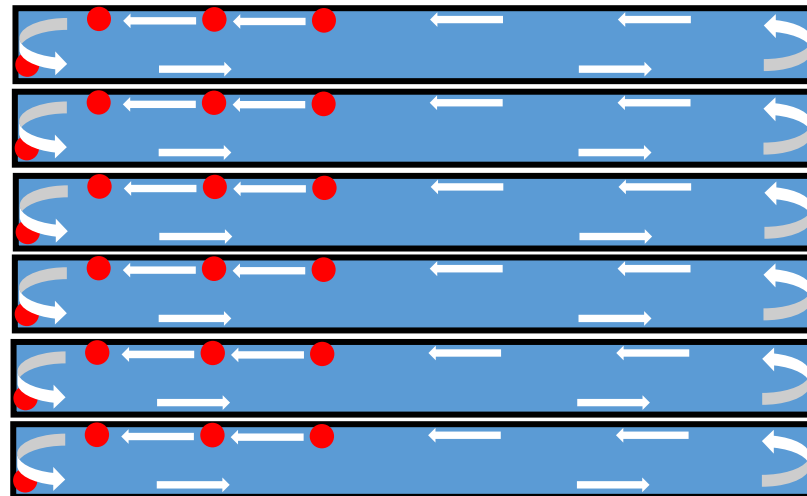
- Swimmers enter the water from pool sides adjacent to their pre-determined starting locations in each lane.
- For basic drills, swimmers would be required to circle swim and maintain spacing in water.



4. Swim Practice:

➤ Pace Training

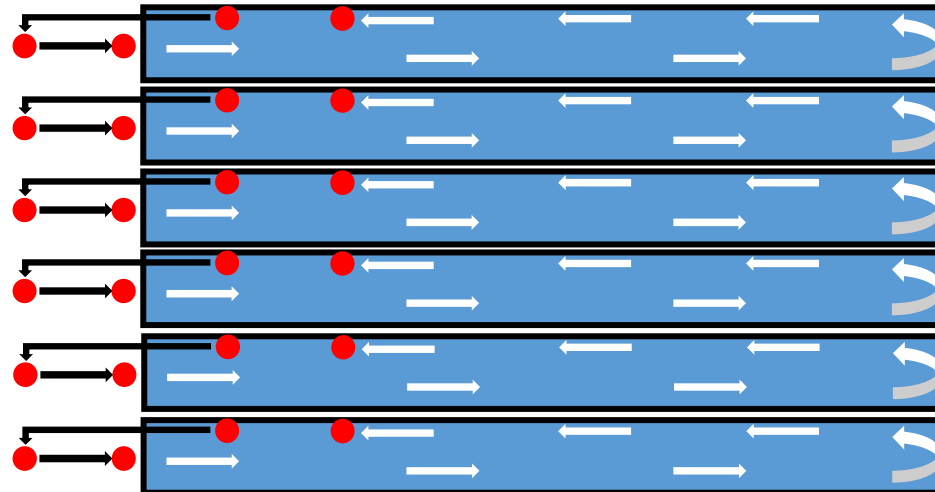
- Swimmers would begin in the positions indicated below.
- Waiting swimmers should maintain at least 6ft of in-water spacing



4. Swim Practice:

➤ Dive Starts

- Swimmers would begin in the positions indicated below.
- Waiting swimmers should maintain at least 6ft of in-water spacing and 6ft deck spacing while behind the starting blocks.



4. Swim Practice:

➤ Separation of Practice Groups

- It is good practice to maintain separation of practice groups (i.e., the outgoing from the incoming).
- A 10 minute gap is recommended.
- Prescribed staging areas could also be used to keep the incoming group separated.
- Using a different entry and exit gates is also a good practice if possible.



4. Swim Practice:

➤ Deck Markers

- Small rubber or plastic “dots” can be used to maintain social distancing for a practice group while on deck.
- Very inexpensive to purchase.
- Coaches would arrange them as desired before each practice and swimmers would be asked to sit or stand at their designated dot while out of the water.



4. Swim Practice:

➤ Larger Practice Groups

- Should you have a bigger group than practice capacity allows for, there are several methods to manage:
 - Break the group into 2 practice groups, e.g., 9-10 group A and 9-10 group B
 - Break the group into 50% in water practice and 50% dryland and alternate each group through both at practice



4. Swim Practice:

➤ Younger Swimmers / Not yet “water safe” swimmers

- Challenge for this practice group is swimming proficiency may not be sufficient for them to enter the water at the deeper end, where they cannot stand. The deep end may need to be excluded for this reason.
- Additionally more coaches and / or helpers may be needed to appropriately supervise.
- Should in-water instruction be required, masks should be worn at all times by coaches and / or volunteers.





4. Swim Practice:

➤ Parents / Guardians

- To aid with social distancing, it is recommended that the number of individuals in the area directly around the pool be minimized. Parents should be therefore outside of this area as much as is possible.
- This will be more of an issue with younger practice groups and as such parents should be made aware of this upon registration.
- Additionally, parents need to be socially distancing with face mask while outside of the practice area if they are with other parents.

➤ Restrooms / Locker-rooms

- Please liaise with your subdivision HOA / pool operator to find a solution that works for all.
- These generally are smaller, enclosed spaces with multiple common touch surfaces and should be considered for emergency use only during swim practices.
- Swimmers should arrive dressed to swim after having recently visited their home restroom.
- Should an unforeseen need arise for a potty trip (and this will happen!), restrooms should be sanitized by a team volunteer.

5. Dual Meets

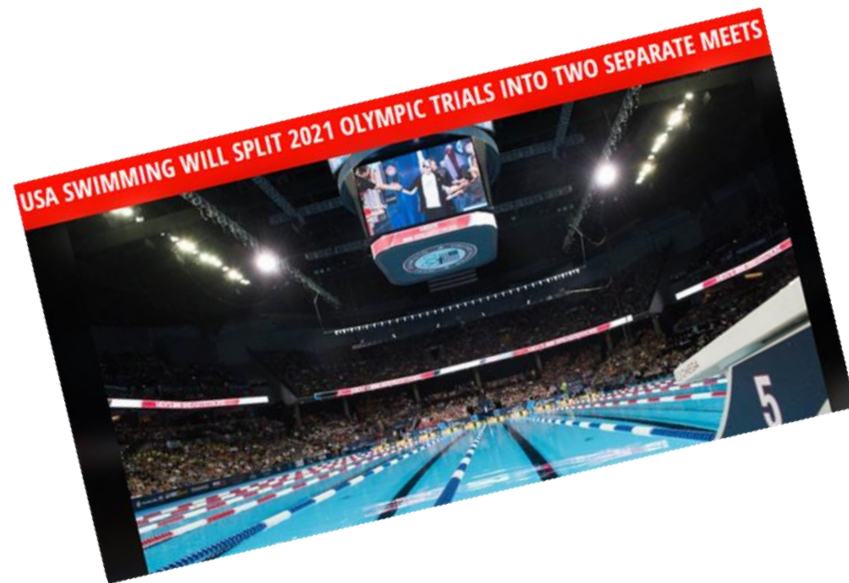
➤ General

- Leveraged techniques and lessons learnt from USA Swimming and the UIL over the past 6 months of actively swim meets with COVID-19, where consistently two higher level, common problems have emerged;
 - Social Distancing drives the need to greatly reduce the total number of individuals at swim meets,
 - With modifications made to swim meets to incorporate social distancing, wearing of face masks and enhanced hygiene, how best to ensure that swim meet duration is maintained at a reasonable length.
- For these reasons the *Age Group Split-Alternate Weekends* modifications were made to and voted upon by the full NWAL board for the NWAL 2021 swim season.

5. Dual Meets

➤ Age Group Split – Alternate Weekends

- Age group split 10U and 11+
- Division Finals weekend converted into dual meet weekend, making 6 weekends
- Involves no other change to NWAL calendar
- Accommodates considerably slower heat interval (~60 secs) while keeping each meet length to approximately the same as prior years
- Each swimmer will compete at 3 dual meets through the season
- Swimmer Individual Entry and Relay entry limits do not change





5. Dual Meets

➤ Small Team Caveat

- Small teams (100 or less swimmers) make up 12% of NWAL (by swimmer number)
- Splitting by age group potentially could make it difficult for small teams to find sufficient volunteers, have swimmers for all events and run a competitive meet.
- If combined 2019 roster total of both teams in any particular dual meet matchup is 200 or less, those teams may elect to swim the meet without age group split, in full, at one pool.
- Not required should BOTH teams wish to keep the age group split and alternating weekends.
- If swum at single meet, then one weekend (of the 2 weekends of the dual meet matchup) is **REQUIRED** to be a bye weekend.

Combined 2019 Rosters	Age Group Split	Schedule
More than 200 swimmers	Required	Alternating Weekends for each age group
200 or less swimmers	Not Required (unless both teams agree to utilize age group split)	Alternating bye week (unless age group split utilized)

5. Dual Meets

➤ Modified Schedule

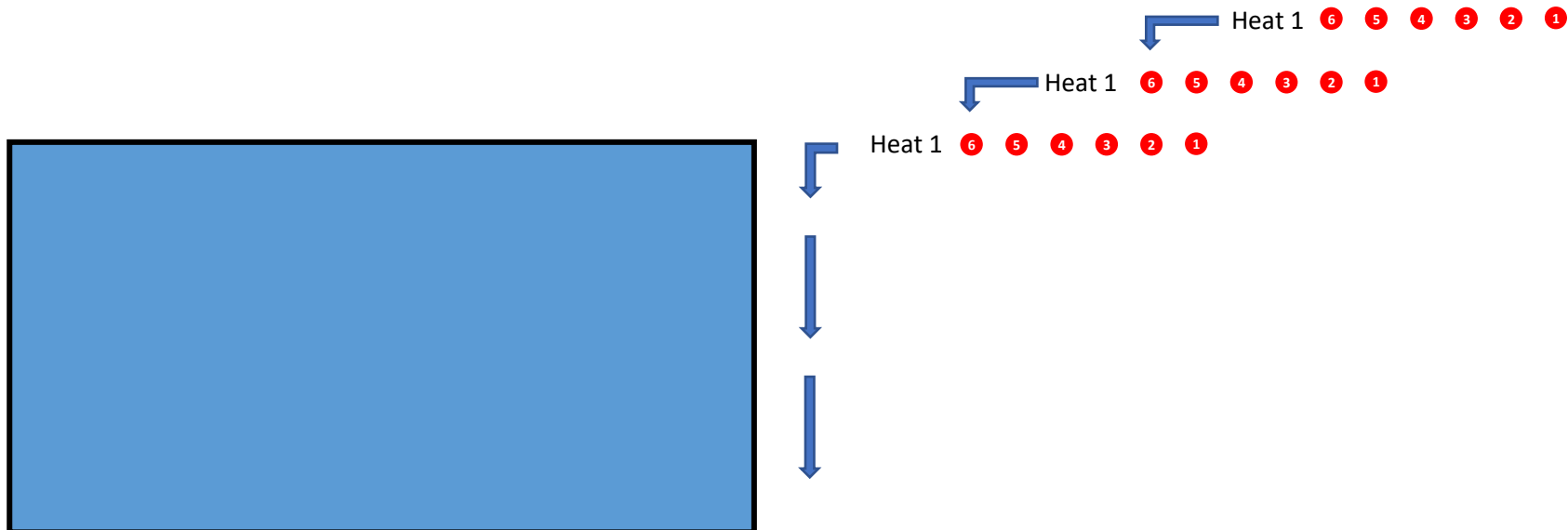
- Home team has right of first refusal to host. Can offer to other team as required.
- Age group split (10U or 11+) can be swum on either weekend.
- The actual single meet and bye meet weekends can be decided by mutual agreement.

6 Team Division Meet Schedule							5 Team Division Meet Schedule							4 Team Division Meet Schedule						
DIVISION	15-May	22-May	29-May	5-Jun	12-Jun	19-Jun	DIVISION	15-May	22-May	29-May	5-Jun	12-Jun	19-Jun	DIVISION	15-May	22-May	29-May	5-Jun	12-Jun	19-Jun
Team A	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	Team A	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	AWAY	HOME	Team A	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY
	B10U	B11+	C10U	C11+	D10U	D11+		B10U	B11+	C10U	C11+	E10U	E11+		B10U	B11+	C10U	C11+	D10U	D11+
Team B	HOME	AWAY	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME	Team B	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY	Team B	HOME	AWAY	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME
	A10U	A11+	D10U	D11+	F10U	F11+		A10U	A11+	D10U	D11+	C10U	C11+		A10U	A11+	D10U	D11+	C10U	C11+
Team C	HOME	AWAY	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME	Team C	HOME	AWAY	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME	Team C	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY
	F10U	F11+	A10U	A11+	E10U	E11+		Inter-Divisional 10U	Inter-Divisional 11+	A10U	A11+	B10U	B11+		D10U	D11+	A10U	A11+	B10U	B11+
Team D	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	AWAY	HOME	Team D	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	AWAY	HOME	Team D	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	AWAY	HOME
	E10U	E11+	B10U	B11+	A10U	A11+		E10U	E11+	B10U	B11+	Inter-Divisional 10U	Inter-Divisional 11+		C10U	C11+	B10U	B11+	A10U	A11+
Team E	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY	Team E	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY	Team E	AWAY	HOME	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY
	D10U	D11+	F10U	F11+	C10U	C11+		D10U	D11+	Inter-Divisional 10U	Inter-Divisional 11+	A10U	A11+		D10U	D11+	Inter-Divisional 10U	Inter-Divisional 11+	A10U	A11+
Team F	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY								Team F	AWAY	HOME	HOME	AWAY	HOME	AWAY
	C10U	C11+	E10U	E11+	B10U	B11+									C10U	C11+	E10U	E11+	B10U	B11+

5. Dual Meets

➤ Social Distancing Recommendations

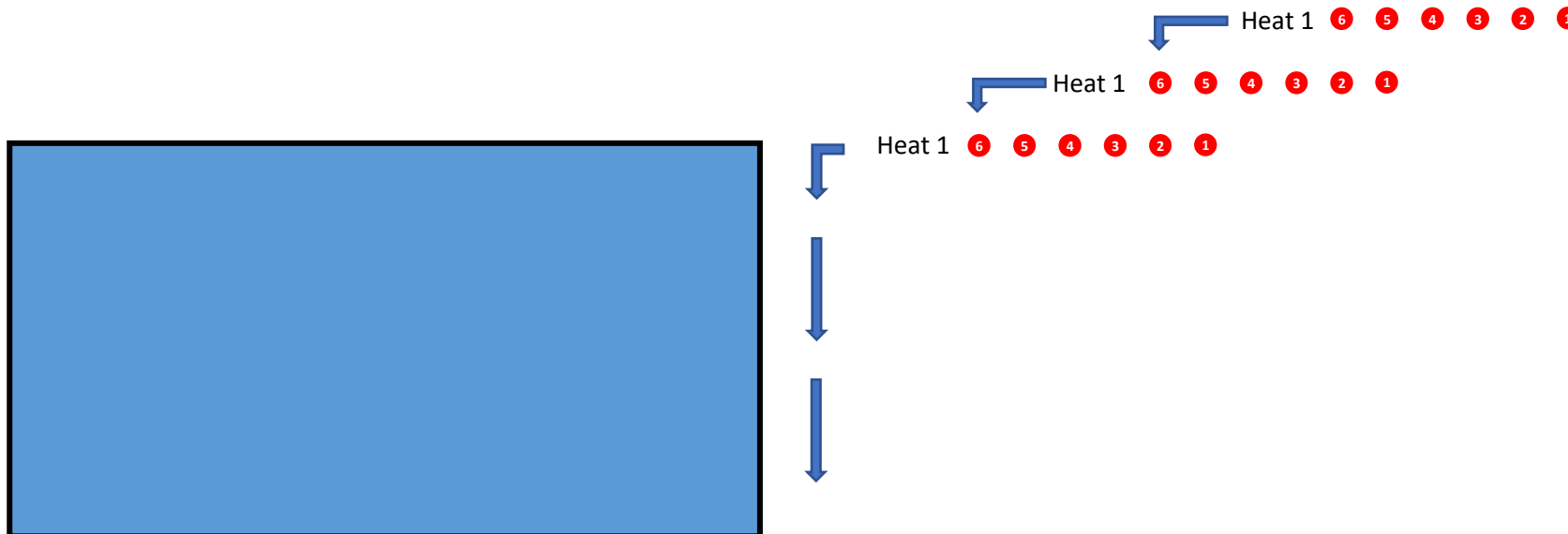
- Modified Ready Bench
 - Swimmers cannot be gathered for subsequent heats as in prior years or they will be too close together for effective social distancing
 - Recommend a **linear ready bench** which is a single or double line, marked by numbered rubber dots, located at least 6ft apart from each other. Swimmers would stand on their dot
 - Recommend no more than 3 heats be assembled using a linear ready bench due to space requirements
 - Different ready bench configurations are possible with the key being 6ft of spacing in all directions



5. Dual Meets

➤ Social Distancing Recommendations

- Only 1 heat at the blocks at one time
 - Swimming more than a 25 yd event, swimmers should exit the water and move off in the opposite direction to the next heat, BEFORE the next heat is moved to the starting blocks
 - Swimming 25 yd events, swimmers exit at the opposite end and the next heat can be moved to the starting blocks before the heat in the water has finished

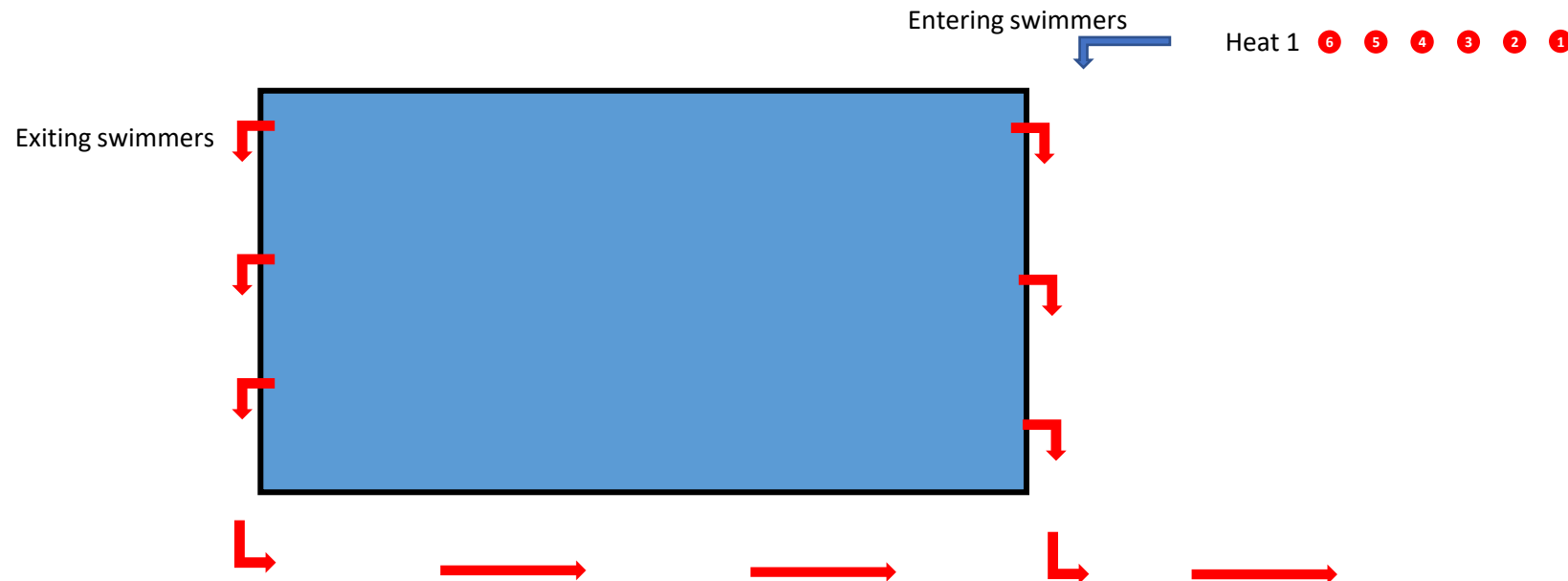


5. Dual Meets

➤ Social Distancing Recommendations

- Traffic Plan

- Recommended that each team lay out a heat movement *traffic plan* such that swimmers can be moved from the linear ready bench to the blocks, swim their event, exit the pool and depart the pool deck area, visit the coach all without coming into contact with another heat
- This is generally best accomplished by having a one-way system for entry and exit and also only moving the next heat into place when the previous has cleared the area.





5. Dual Meets

➤ Social Distancing Recommendations

- Reduced Volunteers
 - Recommend 2 timers per lane and no scribes. The heat turnover rate is slow and 2 timers can easily keep up. Times will be the average of the 2 watch times
 - Recommend minimizing number of officials on deck at once. Consider only 4 stroke and turn officials operating from the quadrant positions and no stroke officials. Consider several rotations for officials if you have a large number to utilize.
 - Recommend each team only a **maximum of 2 coaches** on deck at one time.
 - Recommend reducing computer and other volunteers in any indoor area (such as the club house) reduced to the absolute minimum.
- Reduced Meet Attendees
 - Dependent upon the available space at your particular pool, you may not be able to have individuals attend the meet and be effectively socially distanced. If this is the case, you will need to make changes to reduce the total number of meet attendees **to the point where social distancing can be achieved.**
 - Not all pools are going to be the same with respect to available space and thus a degree of tolerance is required by all teams for the 2021 swim season.
 - Please make sure your COVID-19 POCs are communicating well before a scheduled dual meet to ensure space limitations and any associated reduction in attendees required is known well ahead of the meet date.

5. Dual Meets

➤ PPE Recommendations

- Face Masks

- **Everybody** at a dual meet should wear a face mask at all times (of course except when drinking or eating). Face mask to be worn covering both the mouth and nose.
- Swimmers should wear a face mask until arrival at the starting blocks
- Remove face mask at starting blocks and place in a Ziplock bag
- A small plastic tote or storage crate (~6" x 6") can be used to store the bagged mask. For 25 yard events a volunteer will be needed to move the crates to the other end
- After swimming their event, swimmers should re-apply their face masks BEFORE departing the area



5. Dual Meets

➤ Enhanced Hygiene Recommendations

- Each team should provide sanitizing liquid & sanitizing wipes at locations around the pool deck for use by swimmers and / or volunteers
- A volunteer should be posted to provide periodic (perhaps hourly) restroom sanitation visits throughout the meet with special attention to cleaning frequently touched surfaces such a door handles, commode flush handle, taps etc.
- Frequent handwashing should be encouraged for all participants and it important a sufficient supply of soap and / or sanitizing liquid be available within restrooms.
- Encourage everybody to bring their own supply of hand sanitizer, especially volunteers.



5. Dual Meets

➤ Concessions

- Recommendations
 - Provide pre-packaged food only
 - No shared items – condiments, sauces, serving silverware etc.
 - No community ice chests for drinks storage. Bring own water / soft drinks
 - Not to use cash money, card swipes only
 - Manage serving lines to avoid being too close
 - Potential to utilize food trucks

