

March 24, 2020

Update on COVID-19 – Next Steps in Supporting Clubs

Dear Club Presidents and Head Coaches,

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 Pandemic is and has affected all of us. I feel unsettled and unsure of what the near future brings both for our swimming community and personally for my family. The common phrase I have been using on a daily basis with the staff of Swim Alberta is “*pause*” We need to *pause* as an organization and not rush to make quick decisions that have unintended consequences for the future, both short and long term. This is not to say that decisions are not being made, or that the hard decisions for the future are not being addressed, only that the responses and decisions from three weeks ago that were more easily made, are not necessarily the responses and decisions that need to be provided today. I know I am not alone in this; I know every head coach and every club board is finding themselves in the same place.

These are uncertain times, leaving all of us with many difficult decisions around next steps regarding the operating of our clubs and associations. Club Boards should continue to work closely with head coaches and take time to consider all options, *pausing* to review (amongst other items); the clubs current financial position; the financial outlook and projections for the short, medium and long term; club policies and contracts; employment laws and regulation prior to making any decisions; and likely most importantly how to maintain a sense of connection to club membership during this period of social distancing. Pausing long enough, making sure future unintended consequences based on your decisions have been thought out as best as can be.

Myself and the Board of Swim Alberta are working through this as well. We are assessing our current financial position, looking at budgets, assessing our human resources, providing services to our members and beginning to think about preparedness for when we are back in the pool. As these plans are finalized, they will be shared with the membership of Swim Alberta.

Although Swim Alberta cannot give Club’s specific answers to questions around what your club should be doing or the decisions that you are having to make, we can provide you with tools and information to assist you through this period. To help facilitate this, Swim Alberta has created a page on the website to share information and compiled resources for clubs while managing the COVID-19 pandemic. [WEBSITE LINK](#)

Attached to this letter is a summary of some of the current and next steps Swim Alberta is taking to support our membership.

As always, I remain committed to providing you with updates and information as I have it available to me. Please reach out with any questions you may have to me at chumphrey@swimalberta.ca or by phone at 1-780-415-1780.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheryl Humphrey".

Cheryl Humphrey
Executive Director

Some of what Swim Alberta is Currently Working on:

- **Compiling Government Programs:** With the recent announcement of many government programs, Swim Alberta has compiled a list of these programs that clubs can begin to access as needed. A list of relevant government programs can be found on the Swim Alberta website under [COVID-19 INFO](#). Some of these government programs are still awaiting details to how organizations can access them and as those details become available Swim Alberta is committed to updating the information and advising clubs.
- **Resources and Information for Coaches:** The technical staff, under the oversight of Stephen Norris are pulling together resources that coaches can use to support athletes in home-based dryland training program, nutrition and mental health during this period of the COVID-19 pandemic. This information will be launched on Wednesday, March 25th and a notice will be sent out to all clubs. This information will be available on the Swim Alberta website – COVID-19 INFO page.
- **Online NCCP Courses:** In April the Community Coach and Swimming 101 courses will be shifted to be delivered online. Anyone registered in these programs will be able to complete the course and achieve a trained status. Additional courses will be set up as needed to continue to support the education of coaches.
- **Mental Health of athletes, coaches and our swimming community is top of mind.** Swim Alberta is looking at how we can set up on-line learning forums to support athletes and coaches with mental health initiatives through this period and will look to extend this, when possible to club boards and parents. Watch for more information on this in coming days.
- Connecting with Presidents/Head Coaches.

Swim Alberta Work Behind the Scenes:

- Swim Alberta, Swimming Canada and the other Provincial Sections are meeting on a weekly basis through this period to navigate through the response and decisions around COVID-19.
- Swim Alberta has been invited to attend weekly meetings with the Minister of Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women (Alberta Government) along with other provincial sport organizations. Through these meetings we are able to communicate and share the impacts to sport, including Swim Alberta Clubs. Some of these initial impacts include: gaming revenues, ability to delay AGM's and adhere to the requirements of the Societies Act, access to multi-sport NCCP training for coaches; amongst other relevant topics for sport. As information becomes available, Swim Alberta is committed to providing this to clubs.
- Swim Alberta Board and leadership staff are meeting regularly to develop contingency plans around programs and services both for the current year and the 2020-2021 year, including budget forecasting for contingency plans.

The Work of our Clubs

Many clubs have stepped up with some unique programming ideas to deliver virtually to their membership. It is important that where clubs can, they continue to connect and be involved with their membership. This is also a time for clubs to come together to share not only what they are facing, but also the creative programming and services that are being offered to athletes. In the coming days, Swim Alberta will look to see how we can pull together clubs and head coaches to share some of this great work and next steps.

A Note about Insurance

A separate update on insurance will be shared with clubs and posted on the Club Resources-COVID-19 webpage, with a target of Wednesday March 25th, as confirmation from Swim Alberta's insurance provider is expected by then.