



Starting September 1, 2021, USA Swimming, its Zones, LSCs and member clubs are required to implement the updated Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policy (MAAPP) in full. This resource is intended to provide information to the Adult Participants section of the policy.

Adult Participants (formerly referred to as Applicable Adult)

Any adult 18 years of age or older who is a:

- USA Swimming member, either athlete or non-athlete;
- Participating non-member (e.g., meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.);
- Authorized, approved or appointed by USA Swimming, Zones, Local Swimming Committees (“LSCs”) or member clubs to have regular contact with (e.g., ongoing interactions during a 12-month period wherein the individual is in a role of active engagement) or authority over Minor Athletes; and/or
- Within the governance or disciplinary jurisdiction of USA Swimming, Zones, LSCs or member clubs.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: When am I an Adult Participant?

A: Once you trigger any of the four descriptions of an Adult Participant you are an Adult Participant.

Q: How long do I retain Adult Participant status?

A: An individual is an Adult Participant for as long as one of the four descriptions applies to that individual.

Q: How is “adult athlete” defined?

A: An adult athlete is an athlete member age 18 and over.

Q: Are chaperones Adult Participants?

A: Yes. Chaperones are adults authorized to have regular contact with or authority over a minor athlete and therefore trigger Adult Participant status.

Q: Are junior coaches Adult Participants?

A: No. Because Junior coaches are under the age of 18 they are not considered Adult Participants. Junior coaches are perceived to be in a position of power or authority over minor athletes so they are required to be non-athlete members of USA Swimming. As a result, junior coaches must be educated on the importance of boundaries between adults and youth are important. This knowledge base will be important for junior coaches who become adult coaches.

Q: Are parent meet volunteers Adult Participants?

A: Yes. A parent meet volunteer is an Adult Participant if the parent triggers any of the four descriptions of an Adult Participant. For example, if the volunteer is authorized to have regular contact or authority over minor athletes during the meet, that volunteer is an Adult Participant.

Q: Do all Adult Participants have to become USA Swimming members and complete APT and a background check, specifically those participating non-members?

A: No. MAAPP applies to Adult Participants. The APT requirement of membership applies to USA Swimming members. Participating non-members, by definition, are not USA Swimming members and do not have complete the requirements of membership. The requirements to become a member can be found in Article 305.5 of the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.

Q: Is a U.S. Masters Swimming (“USMS”) member an Adult Participant?

A: An individual is an Adult Participant if he or she meets any of the four descriptions of an Adult Participant, so a USMS member may be “Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over a minor athlete.” However, we would not consider a USMS member who only has contact with a minor athlete by virtue of being at the same competition to meet this standard and be considered an Adult Participant. By comparison, a USMS member who regularly trains with minor athletes at practice would be more likely to meet this standard.



Q: What does “authority over” mean when referencing Adult Participants in MAAPP?

A: An individual has authority over a minor athlete when a power imbalance exists between the adult and the minor athlete or when the adult has perceived power over a minor athlete. A coach always has this perceived power over or power imbalance between him or herself and the minor athlete. A volunteer or participating non-member, depending on their role, might have that perceived power only while fulfilling their volunteer roles.

Q: Do volunteers at meets have to fulfill the General Acknowledgement section of MAAPP?

A: No. The General Acknowledgement section applies to athletes, parents, coaches and non-athlete members of a member club. It is not a requirement that meet volunteers, such as timers, read and acknowledge MAAPP before they can volunteer at a meet. However, MAAPP does apply to meet volunteers who are authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes. One way to ensure that these volunteers are aware of the MAAPP requirements is to include the expectations in meet briefings or meet information, or verbally highlighting the expectations for volunteers.

Q: Does MAAPP apply to meet volunteers at all times?

A: Meet volunteers must follow MAAPP during the time that they trigger Adult Participant status. For example, if a meet volunteer is authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes during one morning session at the meet but does not volunteer at any other point in the meet, that individual is an Adult Participant during the one morning session.

Q: Are LSCs required to put information about MAAPP in their meet information?

A: Yes. It is required to provide information about MAAPP in meet information. This language is provided by USA Swimming to give notice to those involved on how MAAPP applies to their involvement in the meet. Including this language in meet information creates consistent messaging of the importance of MAAPP and reinforces the rules to Adult Participants.

Q: Are all adults that use a shared facility (which is also used by a member club for purposes of practice or competition) considered Adult Participants?

A: No. An individual is an Adult Participant if he or she meets any of the four descriptions of an Adult Participant, so an adult member of the general public may be “Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over a minor athlete.” However, we would not consider an adult member of the general public who only has contact with a minor athlete by virtue of being at the same shared facility to meet this standard and be considered an Adult Participant.