



**PARENT HANDBOOK
2023/24 SEASON**

(Version September 2023)





ABOUT US

Aquasonics is an artistic swimming club located in British Columbia, Canada. We have been providing top-quality training and coaching to athletes for over 25 years, and are widely recognized as the premier artistic swimming club in the region. Our athletes have achieved success at the local, national, and international level, and we are proud to have played a role in their development as both athletes and individuals. We believe in the power of sport to bring people together and build strong, supportive communities. Our coaches are highly qualified and experienced professionals who are dedicated to helping our athletes achieve their goals. We offer a range of programs for athletes of all ages and abilities, from beginner to elite. Whether you are just starting out in the sport or looking to take your training to the next level, we have a program that is right for you.

Aquasonics is a BC Society, non-profit organization and registered charity. A society is an independent legal entity, a corporate 'person' that exists separate and apart from its members. Sport Club societies are non-profit organizations and must direct any profits back into fulfilling the objectives of the organization. As a society, we are governed by our volunteer Board of Directors.

MISSION STATEMENT

Through artistic swimming, the Aquasonics will inspire our athletes to strive for and reach for their goals with determination, pride, professionalism, teamwork, respect, and excellence. We will strive for excellence in the sport of artistic swimming by providing opportunities to foster and promote a positive environment where athletes can reach their full potential, both athletically and in the area of personal development.

VISION STATEMENT

From participation to podium, the Aquasonics is British Columbia's premier artistic swimming training centre, developing champions at every level. Our vision is:

- To encourage the importance of Team and Club spirit and support for one another.
- To realize that every athlete has something to give and something to gain.
- To promote a high standard of coaching and training for all.
- To establish friendships: the Club is a success when all coaches and swimmers know each other by name and can appreciate each others' accomplishments throughout the season.
- To teach good sportsmanship and develop life skills.
- To develop well-rounded athletes who desire to achieve their personal best.
- To offer opportunities for excellence for all levels of participation at both the provincial and national levels.
- To develop team and individual artistic swimming skills in a positive environment.



PROGRAMS

Aquasonics is proud to offer Recreational, Masters, Provincial, and National programs within the Club's structure. Athletes in the Provincial Stream program compete within the province of BC, while the National Stream program competes nationally, with the opportunity to compete internationally in some cases. The Provincial Stream program is intended for athletes who are developing their artistic swimming skills and abilities. The National Stream program is open to athletes 11 years and older.

CODE OF CONDUCT ATHLETES

A sporting club's reputation is primarily that of its members. Every athlete is therefore an important promoter of their Club. As a member of the Club, every athlete must agree to always offer their best in the respect of their peers, coaches, the officials and the rules of the sport. Athletes must adhere to the Aquasonics [Member Code of Conduct](#) as listed on our website.

More specifically, athletes must:

- Attend practices on time and inform the coaches beforehand of any expected absence or lateness
- Respect teammates, coaches, officials and rules of the Club/sport
- Read and sign the Anti-Bullying Agreement at the beginning of the season and provide the signed copy to the athlete's coach.
- Participate in all competitions, demonstrations and pre-swims for which they are selected, unless they are seriously ill or injured
- Demonstrate a will to improve by performing their training seriously
- Represent the Club and the team in a positive manner, including through the use of electronic devices and social media platforms
- Refrain from smoking, drinking, vaping and using any illegal or banned substances in sport.

Participating in sports is one of the best training schools for personal development, and it is in this light that athletes must commit themselves to follow these rules. If an athlete breaks the code of conduct, they may be asked to leave the practice until they are ready to follow the rules. In this situation, the athlete's parent(s) will be informed of the incident and a meeting with the athlete, coach and parent may be arranged. All athletes must understand that the Club does not tolerate smoking, vaping or the use of any banned or illegal substances. If we suspect that this rule has been broken we will contact the parent immediately. An athlete that is caught using a banned substance puts themselves and the entire Club at risk. The athlete will be expelled from the sport for a period of time and the Club will not be allowed to enter competitions in the year following the incident. Please advise your coaches of any medications you are required to take. A doctor's note explaining the medication will be required when attending competition.



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For a list of banned substances (as well as allowed substances), please refer to the www.cces.ca website (Canadian Council for Ethics in Sport).

Specific club policies on attendance, anti-doping and <https://www.bcaquasonics.com/policies/> .

FEES

Participating in artistic swimming entails a number of other costs which vary according to the level of participation and which are collected by the Club. Each swimmer has an individual account which itemizes their charges and payments throughout the swimming season.

The major expenses consist of the following: Team fees are paid directly to Aquasonics Artistic Swimming Club at registration. These fees depend on the swimmer's level as determined after placement assessments at the beginning of each season. Club yearly registration fees are paid directly to Aquasonics at registration. These fees include the cost of Club affiliation and administrative expenses. Solo, duet and technical training fees are paid directly to Aquasonics at registration. These fees are generally reviewed at the beginning of each season depending on the expected level of participation. BC Artistic Swimming also charges fees to each swimmer's account, which are paid through the club such as athlete insurance, competition fee, training meet fees.

Competition fees are paid directly to Aquasonics ahead of competitions. The amounts paid are estimates and finalized at the end of the year based on actual costs incurred and could result in either an invoice or a refund. These costs include:

- coaches' compensation for time at meets
- coaches' and chaperones' per diems
- coaches' and chaperones' mileage
- athletes', coaches' and chaperones' travel fees (hotel, airfare, charter bus, etc.)
- athlete competition entry fees
- music fees

Costs are divided among the athletes and depend on the destination and duration of the trip. Should there be a training camp, the costs will be included in this category as well. Please refer to the Fee Structure on the Club's website for details regarding the current season. Food expenses are collected separately at the time of travel to include meals and snacks. Food costs per day are approximately \$30-\$55 depending on if breakfast at the hotel is included or not.



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Other fees are paid directly to Aquasonics after the registration period has ended at a date determined by the Club. These fees include competitive gear, training suits, competition routine suits.

As a non-profit organization, the club relies on its members to run club events. Although certain activities will be coordinated by the Club's executive, most will be carried out by a larger group of parents. Parents are expected to help ensure that various activities undertaken by the Club, such as fundraising and organization of competitions, are successful and to ensure that they do not put too heavy a burden on a small group of parents. Furthermore, we cannot insist enough on the importance of your presence at competitions and demonstrations to encourage your child

Family Commitment deposits are charged to families upon registration. Families have the option of paying out their volunteer deposit or contributing time to make the club stronger. Please see the Family Commitment Handbook for additional information. Family commitment deposits are returned to volunteers at the end of the season in June, according to hours contributed to the club.

ADDITIONAL PRIVATE COACHING

In the National Stream program, all athletes receive individual coaching time (alone or in small groups) to help advance and improve their technical and routine skills.

In the Provincial Stream program, athletes have the option to take private lessons either alone or in small groups. The privates are scheduled on a weekly basis based on the availability of both the swimmer and coach, with consultation with the Headcoach. In both the National and Provincial Streams, if a private is missed due to the coach's absence or other extenuating circumstances (ex. pool closure, unplanned events resulting in loss of pool space, etc.), the private will be rescheduled for another time. If a private is missed due to an athlete's absence it is not guaranteed that it will be rescheduled. Rescheduling in this circumstance is at the coach's discretion if time and pool space permits. For additional information, please refer to the Club's website for the formal Payment, Athlete Withdrawal and Injury Policies. All private lessons must be arranged through the Club and are based on pool space & coach availability.



PAYMENT OPTIONS

Aquasonics Artistic Swimming Club tries to be as flexible as possible in terms of payment options. However, in order to continue this, we rely on the goodwill of participants to respect deadlines. Should a deadline not be met the Club reserves the right to suspend participation until payment is received and a \$100 late fee will be charged. Athlete accounts must remain in good standing to be eligible to receive a subsidy at the end of the season should the Club be in a position to give them.

The club season runs from September to June. Fees are calculated on an annual basis. September is athlete assessment and team placement month each season. Club Registration, BCAS Insurance and a September Training fee is due by Sept 1st.

Once athlete team placement has been determined, the appropriate training fee can then be paid in either a lump sum at the start of the season in October or in 5 monthly installments from Oct-Jan as follows:

Fee Payment Date	Option A - Lump Sum	Option B - Installments
By Sept 1st, 2023	Club Registration Fee BCAS Insurance Fee Assessment Training Fee	Club Registration Fee BCAS Insurance Fee Assessment Training Fee
By Oct 1st, 2023	Lump Sum Training Fee for selected team and extra routines	1st Installment Training fee for selected team and extra routines
By Nov 1st, 2023	/	2nd Installment Training fee for selected team and extra routines
By Dec 1st, 2023	/	3rd Installment Training fee for selected team and extra routines
By Jan 1st, 2024	/	4th Installment Training fee for selected team and extra routines
By Jan 30th, 2024	/	5th Installment Training fee for selected team and extra routines
Other expenses posted to athlete account throughout the season	Competition suit, team travel, competition fees, club gear, etc.	Competition suit, team travel, competition fees, club gear, etc.



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From September 30, 2023 onwards to November 30, a swimmer must provide two weeks written notice to the VP Finance to withdraw from the program. The month in which notice to withdraw is offered and the following month's fees must be paid. December 1st forward, a swimmer must provide written notice to withdraw. No fees will be refunded, unless the athlete is withdrawing due to medical or extraordinary reasons (bereavement, move out of province, etc.). In such case, the Medical Withdrawal Policy will apply.

Our volunteers and Board of Directors give their time to create a vibrant club, manage the Society, and serve the club as a whole for the benefit of all athletes and coaches. As all volunteers in the club, they do not receive any discounts, rebates on their swimmers fees or other advantages for volunteering their time.

FUNDRAISING

In order to help athletes meet the costs of participating in their sport, fundraising activities such as bottle drives, holiday fundraising, Fundschrift, etc. may be undertaken. Teams are permitted to have fundraisers supporting their team only, the activity must be approved by the Board beforehand. It must be stressed that these campaigns require the participation of volunteer parents who agree to undertake and organize the activity. The team coaches cannot be expected to organize and participate in such activities. Participation in these efforts is not mandatory, however, please note that athletes who do not participate in these fundraising activities will not benefit from the funds raised. Experience has shown us that active participation by many athletes can have a significant impact on reducing overall artistic swimming costs therefore, we strongly urge your support. Funds raised are tracked throughout the season and credited to the athlete's account at the end of the season. This results in a reduction of overall training and competition fees credited at the end of the year or will be part of the refund given. No exceptions will be made.

COMMUNICATION

Given the large number of athletes and teams at various stages, each with a different training schedule, the Club relies heavily on internal communication.

All teams hold a welcome and season launch meeting in the Fall and all parents and athletes are expected to attend. Email Club reminders, announcements, events/activities and other communications will be sent to you by email.

Whenever urgent information must be passed on to you (such as unforeseen pool closure, change in training, etc.), your team's parent representative will contact you by email and/or phone. Occasionally, the coach will send home information with the athletes.

Once you are registered as members of BC Artistic Swimming, you will receive periodic newsletters regarding the artistic swimming community activities in BC.



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Please contact your child's team head coach via e-mail for any questions or concerns. Your child's team head coach is the first line of communication. Some issues may not be able to be resolved through e-mail and may require a face-to-face meeting. Should this be necessary, please schedule a meeting with your child's coach via e-mail. Should concerns persist, the club head coach of your child's level or the Executive Board of Directors can be contacted.

WEBSITE

Please visit the Aquasonics website at “ <https://www.bcaquasonics.com/>”. Here you will find news about club activities, contact information for the current Board and coaches, our Program Information Handbook, Policies and Club By-laws, program details and links to other useful Artistic Swimming sites.

The club training and event calendar is also available on our website at : <https://www.bcaquasonics.com/training-schedule/> This calendar will be updated throughout the season and can synchronize with your personal calendar directly.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Swimmers and Parents representing the Aquasonics in social media are encouraged to consider responsible social media behaviour that promotes the club, sport and its members in a safe and engaging way. The Club has adopted the following guidelines from Canadian Artistic Swimming in order to assure social media is used with good judgement that proudly represents our club's policies and values.

Members wishing to communicate via social media about Aquasonics activities should assure their messages respect the club's values and expectations of members. The Aquasonics values freedom of expression in social media as long as the issues respect:

- healthy lifestyles (NOT alcohol and drug use)
- fair play (NOT unveiling privileged information on routines other than your own)
- respect towards institutions and other members (NOT sharing personal information)
- security (NOT making direct or intended threats)
- keep their posts positive and not engage in bullying or negative or critical conversations online
- the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom (NOT making racist or sexual statements)
- sexual equality (promoting equal participation for men and women)
- intellectual property (NOT making logo or name alterations)



TRAVEL

When a competition takes place in the Greater Vancouver Area, each athlete arranges their transportation and must arrive at the meet at the required time. Car-pooling can be arranged. Please note that athletes and parents are expected to treat local competitions with the same professionalism and respect as away competitions. Training and competition schedules that require an athlete to miss school or social activities are considered of equal importance during local competitions.

When a competition takes place out of town, the Club makes the travel and accommodation arrangements for the swimmers, chaperones and coaches with the costs divided evenly among all athletes. When travel to a sleepaway competition is by car and the chaperone(s) and/or coach(es) cannot accommodate transporting the entire team, additional parent driver(s) will be asked to help and may be reimbursed for mileage. Mileage reimbursement must be discussed with the Travel Coordinator prior to the trip to ensure reimbursement, and mileage for the trip is determined by the Club. Athletes and their parents are informed as soon as possible of the travel arrangements.

Athletes must travel with the Club because it encourages team spirit and simplifies arrangements. Exceptions can be made based on particular circumstances and are considered on a case-by-case basis. In these cases the coach must be advised as soon as possible, and the swimmer must arrive at the location of the meet at the required time. In addition, alternative team travel arrangements may be made based on the age and level of individual teams and will be addressed as needed.

It is a Club rule that all athletes are required to stay in rooms with their fellow team members when they travel to out of town meets. The team rooms are closely supervised by chaperones. Athletes will only be permitted to sleep in their parents' hotel room if the athlete provides a doctor's note indicating that he/she is suffering from a serious medical condition that requires special attention. Please note that this does not apply for the PS U10 Team. Travel and accommodation arrangements for the PS U10 Team will be made separately and on a case by case basis for each team/season.

A list of items that should be brought on trips will be provided. It is also necessary to bring adequate money for miscellaneous expenses, such as competition memorabilia that are not covered by competition and food fees. Finally, athletes will be informed beforehand whether specific travel outfits are recommended. Usually the athletes are required to travel in the Club competition gear. If an athlete is injured, suffering from an illness, etc. during the trip, the parent will receive a phone call from the chaperone to bring the parent up to date on the issue at hand. In the case of emergency or serious illness or injury, parents and/or guardians will be responsible for picking up the athlete at the location of the event. For further information, please feel free to communicate with the members of the Board of Directors and/or administrator responsible for arranging travel.



AIR MILES

All athletes must travel together as part of a supervised group. Air Miles/rewards points will be permitted if several criteria are met:

- The parent must be prepared to do all of the booking arrangements for the athlete
- The travel coordinator must be notified very early in the season that the athlete will not be booking with the group
- The athlete must be booked on the same flight as the rest of the team to ensure her/his safety and allow her/his to participate in all team activities and preparations.
- If the teams do not get a group rate because a number of athletes have chosen to fly on reward programs, those doing so must be willing to split the cost of the extra charges.

The Board member and/or admin in charge of travel will email the flight number and details concerning rates as soon as possible so that those flying on rewards can make decisions. Competition fees will be collected as usual. Any excess will be reimbursed at year end.

CHAPERONES

The Club sends at least one parent to accompany each team traveling to competitions. The role of these chaperones is to take care of certain support tasks such as arrangements with the hotel, meals, local transportation and to monitor the athletes while away from the pool, thereby permitting the coaches to concentrate on the competition and on coaching.

Parent chaperones are of the same gender as athletes in our teams. Parents interested in acting as chaperones are invited to speak with their respective coach. It is important that the parent displays that her intentions are to help the coach, the team and the Club. The coach has numerous responsibilities to attend to at the pool, so she greatly appreciates a chaperone who will respect her plan for the athletes and who will alleviate many of the responsibilities outside of the pool environment. Please note that Members of the Board of Directors will have priority due to the fact that they volunteer their time to help the Club on numerous occasions throughout the season.

Since the primary role of the chaperone is to support the athletes and coaches, although timing often permits, it cannot be guaranteed that the chaperone will be able to watch all of her child's competition events. The chaperone's room is for the chaperone and athletes (as needed) only. Spouses, other children, family, friends, etc. are not permitted to stay in the chaperone's room. In the case where multiple teams are competing at the same event, one chaperone per team must accompany the athletes in order to assure proper supervision and support. If it is agreed to send more than one chaperone, reimbursement for per diems, travel, accommodation, etc. will be split between that team's chaperones. All chaperones will need to have a police background check for away competitions. Only parents with completed background checks will be permitted to chaperone.



ALTERNATES SWIMMER POLICY

NATIONAL STREAM

World Aquatics regulations state that teams in the National Stream can compete with a maximum of 8 swimmers in the team event. In order to develop a strong National Stream program, these teams often train with up to 10 members. In addition to providing more athletes with the opportunity to train and compete at a higher level, this also prevents teams from competing with less than 8 swimmers when unforeseen circumstances arise such as illness or injury. Alternates are decided by the team's head coach and are chosen based on the athletes' technical and routine ability, work ethic, attendance and attitude.

Alternates may vary throughout the season and can be changed from one competition to another. Being an alternate on a National Stream team is an opportunity for swimmers to gain experience training in an elite environment and further develop their skills.

Alternates are provided with the same coaching and training opportunities as other National Stream swimmers and are considered extremely valuable members of the team.

PROVINCIAL STREAM

We do our best to not select the same athletes to be an alternate more than once per season. Alternates are selected based on work ethic, attendance, attitude and skill level. Alternates will be selected and informed no later than 1 week prior to the competition.

PARENTS

Parents/Guardians of an athlete of the Club are vital in building a positive environment and relationship with and for the coach and athlete. The Club has established the following guidelines to help reach these goals:

- Coaches will hold an information meeting for families in October. All important dates, competitions, and other pertinent information will be distributed and discussed at this meeting. It is imperative that a representative for each athlete attends
- Parents are encouraged to attend the club's annual AGM in order to obtain important information
- Parents must pay all fees within the specified deadlines and keep their account in good standing to allow the Club to run smoothly. Athletes may not be permitted to swim at competitions if their accounts are not up to date.
- Parents are strongly encouraged to attend all club shows and their child's competitions in order to offer support and become involved in team spirit
- Parents are not permitted on the pool deck at any time due to club insurance restrictions unless they are registered first as volunteers for a specific event.
- While it can be rewarding to watch your child practice and improve, it is important to remember how your presence can affect your child, the coach and the entire team. Therefore, the club recommends that parents allow their child to focus on their



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training, try new skills and work as a team. Your presence can inhibit your child from becoming fully immersed in their practice as their focus naturally shifts towards winning your approval and could distract the coach away from their responsibilities.

- Coaches need to be appreciated and supported. Trust their efforts and abilities as their intentions are always in the best interest of the athletes
- Should a parent have any concerns they should first contact their team coach by email. Emails will receive a response within 48 hours, except on weekends. Should concerns persist the parent can contact the Club's head coach of their child's level. The club's executive board can also be contacted as needed.
- Parents should speak positively of their child's teammates, coaches, and sport when communicating with their child. Parents should avoid criticizing other athletes, teammates, coaches, and coach/Club decisions in front of their child. If a question or concern arises, please speak directly to your child's team coach to avoid the spread of misinformation and/or disrespect towards other Club members
- Parents must read and sign the Code of Conduct at the beginning of the season as part of registration
- Provide your athlete with positive support. Encourage them in the development of their abilities by focusing on the positive aspects of their practice or performance to help build their confidence.
- If your athlete has an upsetting practice or competition, try to listen and empathize with them, as they need your support. All sports are faced with obstacles. Athletes and coaches will learn from their mistakes and grow stronger from their experiences.
- Notification of any absences or tardiness from practice should be sent by email to the athlete's coach.
- At competitions it is important that parents respect the coach's and chaperone's responsibilities.
- At competitions the team will usually eat together, train together and share accommodations at away meets. Parents must encourage athletes to follow competition schedules set forth by their coach. Having athletes follow the team schedule helps to promote bonding, leading to a stronger team unit and assures that athletes are on time.
- At competitions time spent with parents, family and friends may be scheduled at the discretion of the coach and in line with the age and level of the athlete.
- Parents are asked to attend the length of competitions, as outlined in individual schedules, to help instill a philosophy of support and encouragement for the entire club.
- Respect the Club and the team values, including through the use of electronic devices and social media platforms. Parents and athletes must abide by the Aquasonics Communication and Social Media policy.



CHAPERONES' DUTIES

The coach has numerous responsibilities to attend to at the pool, so she greatly appreciates a chaperone who will respect her plan for the athletes and who will alleviate many of the responsibilities outside of the pool environment. Duties of the chaperon include:

- Provide the Travel Coordinator proof of a valid vulnerable sector background check.
- The chaperone is responsible for check-in, check-out and any other business dealing with the hotel. The hotel bill should be paid the night before departure to avoid problems.
- The chaperone is responsible for looking after the athletes at all times including supervision on the airplane and/or bus as well as at the hotel and at restaurants. Parents must leave supervision duties to the chaperones and give the athletes space to come together as a team. The coach is responsible for the athletes when they are at the pool. Chaperones should be close by in case of an emergency.
- The chaperone will monitor the athletes' rooms at curfew and a few times after to ensure that everyone is in their room.
- The chaperone keeps an extra set of keys for the athletes.
- The chaperone supervises trips between the hotel and the pool.
- The chaperone is available to go out and get whatever might be needed at the pool, whether that be food for the swimmers or coaches, medicine, etc.
- The chaperone will organize the settling of accounts with swimmers concerning monies owed for food (i.e. the chaperone collects money to be used for food purchases).
- The chaperone will accompany athletes to the hospital if medical care is needed and will communicate with parents in the case of an injury or illness that requires medical attention. The chaperone will also collect Medicare cards (physical card or photocopy) prior to the trip.
- The chaperone takes headcounts while the athletes are in transit.
- The chaperone lets the athletes know that they must inform her if they are leaving the room even if it is to go down the hall or make a phone call.
- The chaperone checks the rooms in the morning 15 minutes before departure.
- The chaperone is responsible for the airplane tickets.
- Chaperones ensure that the bus, plane and hotel are kept clean.
- Chaperones are allocated a per diem of \$30-\$55 per day depending on whether breakfast is included at the hotel or not and whether meals are being cooked during the competition.



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- Should a chaperone need to pay for unforeseen emergencies or incidentals, a reimbursement upon return from the competition will be provided. Receipts and an expense report must be submitted to the treasurer.
- At the pool the chaperone stays off the deck and does not interfere. They should stay where coaches can find them.
- The chaperone should give the coach space when it is a team meeting, land drill session or anything to do with the artistic swimming coaching.
- Chaperones should support the coach's decision regarding time spent with parents, family and friends which may be scheduled at the discretion of the coach and in line with the age and level of the athlete.
- All chaperones will need to have a police background check for away competitions. Only parents with completed background checks will be permitted to chaperone.

