



TEAM HANDBOOK 2024-2025 SEASON

ONEIDA DOLPHINS, INC.
P.O. BOX 362
ONEIDA, NY 13421
www.oneidadolphins.com
oneidadolphinscoach@gmail.com

A. ONEIDA DOLPHINS SWIM TEAM PHILOSOPHY- "Everybody swims, everybody wins."

The Oneida Dolphins Swim Team is a competitive swim team serving youth ages 19 and under. We are a collective group of swimmers, parents, and coaches who have found swimming to be an excellent venue for teaching important life skills. These skills and values will help our swimmers become positive and productive members of the community.

We encourage personal and team goal setting, self-discipline, team spirit, and sportsmanship in a fun and challenging, safe team environment. The ultimate goal of our program is to have our athletes reach their potential as swimmers. It is our hope that swimmers will build self-esteem, personal relationships, develop moral character, and become better leaders and supporters.

It is the struggle to be our best that causes us to learn the lessons that make swimming a worthwhile endeavor.

YMCA Mission: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

USA Vision Statement: To inspire and enable our members to achieve excellence in the sport of swimming and in life.

The team policies and training requirements are available to you in this handbook. All swimmers who make the team and all parents of those swimmers should read through the handbook and understand all of the outlined policies. Please spend time reading all parts of this handbook. Please reach out to us if you have any questions.

B. COACHING STAFF

Emily Lapier- Coach Emily fell in love with swimming when she started at age nine. She swam for the Southern Saratoga YMCA through her years in school and continued swimming at Plattsburgh State, where she specialized in backstroke and free. Emily currently holds certifications in USA Swimming Foundations of Coaching Level 1 and 2, American Swimming Coaches' Association Level 2 and 3, Principles of YMCA Swimming. Emily is currently a 6th Grade Science Teacher at Camden Middle School. She enjoys working with swimmers of all abilities and ages and sharing her love for the sport. In her free time, Emily enjoys being outside and spending time with her family and dogs.

Melanie Feeney- Coach Melanie started swimming at age ten, commencing her competitive swimming career at LeMoyne College specializing in distance freestyle and distance IM. Melanie is a former Y National qualifier. Melanie brings great knowledge of skill development, specializing in developing stroke technique to our age group swimmers. Melanie provides the base for future success of swimmers in the team program. Melanie currently holds certifications in YMCA Safety Training for Swim Coaches, Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming, and USA Swimming Foundations of Coaching Level 1 and 2. Melanie is a reading teacher at Gansevoort Elementary School in Rome.

Olivia Caroli- Coach Olivia started swimming at the age of nine after Coach Emily influenced Olivia to join the swim team during one of her swim lessons. She swam competitively for 10 years on the Dolphins and then four years on the Oneida High School varsity team. Coach Olivia's favorite strokes include butterfly and backstroke. In high school, Olivia was a multi-NY State YMCA State Meet qualifier along with a Section III Boys Swimming qualifier. Currently, Olivia is working on her masters in School Counseling through St. Bonaventure University. Olivia works for the Oneida Indian Nation, Oneida City School District as a substitute teacher and the YMCA, teaching swim lessons. When Olivia is not coaching, she enjoys going to concerts, being outdoors, hanging out with friends and family, and going shopping!

Emma Kroll- Coach Emma began swimming in third grade and fell in love with the sport. Emma comes to Oneida from Raleigh, NC where she worked as an assistant coach for YOTA Swim Team specializing with swimmers in the 4-16 age group. Emma also competed throughout high school and during her college years at St. Lawrence University. Emma holds certifications in YMCA Safety Training for Swim Coaches, Principles of YMCA Competitive Swimming. Coach Emma currently works as an Operations Coordinator at Spark Golf. While not coaching, Emma enjoys reading, concerts, and spending time with her fiancé. She is very excited to be back coaching this season!

Amber Gzik- Amber has been a part of swimming her entire life. It started in Reading, Pennsylvania, competing at the Ken-Grill Pool with her two older brothers. While swimming in high school, Amber found her other love in the pool with water polo. Upon graduation from Wagner University, Amber joined the Utica College Aquatics Staff as a Graduate Assistant. In this role, she assisted in the swimming and water polo programs. Amber works as an Occupational Therapist at a local rehab facility. She is so happy to be a part of this Dolphin community and is looking forward to contributing to the program.

Kelsey DelMedico- Coach Kelsey started swimming at the age of seven and swam competitively until she graduated from college. After swimming for four years at Hamilton College, Kelsey coached Division I Women's Swimming at Wagner College in Staten Island. In addition to college coaching, Coach Kelsey has coached swimming at other levels including age group and high school. Kelsey has been teaching Earth Science at Frankfort-Schuyler High School for the past seventeen years. She is beyond excited to coach swimming again and can't wait to see the success of all the Dolphin swimmers this upcoming season!

Coach Contact Information: Contact Coaches using the team's email: oneidadolphinscoach@gmail.com

COACH RESPONSIBILITIES

All coaches are here for the love of the sport and want to give back to the next generation of swimmers! They are dedicated to providing opportunities to learn the value of striving for self-improvement and empowerment through swimming. They provide specific stroke instruction and training regimens that allow for swimmers to continually make personal bests. Coaches are responsible for placing swimmers in appropriate training groups and events at meets. Please also see the [Coaches Code of Conduct](#).

2024-2025 BOARD MEMBERS AND CAPTAINS

The Club is managed by a Board of Directors. The board is composed of one (1) general manager and four (4) elected officers with two (2) year terms. The Board's responsibility is to oversee the internal operation of the Club. The Club also has several committees that function to provide for the normal operation of the Club. The board also consists of 2 non-voting positions

Voting Positions: President- John Martin Vice-President- Lisa Gaudet Secretary- Candace Russ Treasurer- Maria Schmitt General Manager- Emily Lapier	Non-Voting Positions Liaison- TBD Meet Director- TBD
---	---

Each season the Oneida Dolphins seeks "captains" to head up the following committees:

- Timing
- Officiating
- Year End Banquet
- Fundraising
- Community Outreach
- Meet Manager
- Concessions
- Apparel
- Pool Set-up
- Meet Programs
- Sponsorships
- Scoreboard Tech Support

Please contact us if you are interested in becoming a captain this season!

D. PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

- A swimmer must adhere to their practice schedule. We have arranged the practices according to the best training groups for your child while utilizing the pool in the best way possible. Always be present **in the main lobby 10 minutes before** the start of practice so that the team can start on schedule and make efficient use of the allotted time. This time is often used as dry land training before practice and/or as a time for stretching.
- Please contact your child's coach if you are going to be late to practice/must leave early from practice. A quick email is appreciated.
- If your swimmer will be out of the water over a long period of time with an injury or illness, please notify the swimmer's coach. A doctor's note from the physician is mandatory for all injuries. This protects your child, and it also protects the coaches and team.
- Practices are closed to observers on deck, but observers can find comfortable seating outside the pool area by the observation windows and are welcome to watch from there.
- All swimmers are responsible for putting all equipment back neatly after each use. Swimmers will not be allowed to leave practice until they do so.
- The Oneida Dolphins understand that families and swimmers are involved in many activities away from the pool. However, in the event that you miss a swim practice due to other outside additional commitments, it is not permitted to reschedule missed swim practice times.
- Parents should be ready to pick up swimmers **15 minutes prior** to the end of their child's practice. The YMCA closes at 9:00 PM. Families of swimmers ages 12&under should meet swimmers in the lobby. Swimmers ages 13&over may meet families for pick up in the circle or main lobby.

WHAT IS NEEDED FOR PRACTICE: (REMEMBER TO LABEL EVERYTHING!)

- Swimmers **MUST** bring goggles, a water bottle, and a cap each day for practice. We encourage swimmers to also wear "drag suits" (old stretched out swimsuits that are worn on top of newer swimsuits for girls or swim trunks for boys). Here is a suggested equipment list by training group:

Equipment	Beginner	Age 1	Age 2, 3	Senior
Kickboard	x	x	x	x
Short fins (NO LONG FINS ALLOWED)	optional	x	x	x
Mesh Bag		x	x	x
Drag Suit		optional	x	x
Hand Paddles			x	x
Snorkel				X

ADVANCING TO NEXT TRAINING GROUP: A swimmer will be evaluated by the Head Coach based on the following: attendance, technique, age, and conditioning. Some questions considered- Does the swimmer demonstrate readiness and determination to advance to the next level of training? Is there a strong work ethic present? Is the next training group age appropriate for the swimmer?

E. 2024-2025 SEASON FEES: There are three types of fees that are associated with the swim team.

Program Service Fee - this is the overall fee for the program. Families have the option to pay in full or in two-installments. If paying in two installments, the first payment is due by September 30, 2024(60%); second payment due by December 1, 2024 (40%). A swimmer may not actively participate until program fee is received or an arrangement has been made between the family and treasurer of the board. The Oneida Dolphins do not prorate seasonal fees for starting late.

Refunds: The Oneida Dolphins Swim Team has a strict NO REFUND POLICY for swimmers who have registered with the team. Once a swimmer commits to the season, fees cannot be refunded. Our financial commitments involve annual contracts based on swimmer registrations. The team is obligated to fulfill these contracts regardless of the number of swimmers we have in the water at any time. If a swimmer is injured and unable to swim per physician's order, a credit will be applied to your account. You must provide a doctor's note to the team by the treating physician.

Termination - termination from the program due to suspension or expulsion due to swimmer's actions will not result in a refund of membership fees.

Regular Season Practice Fees (9/30/24- 2/4/25):

Training Group	Total Cost	1st pmt. 09/30/24 (60%)	2nd pmt. 12/1/24 (40%)
Beginner	\$360	\$216	\$144
Age 1	\$540	\$324	\$216
Age 2	\$700	\$420	\$280
Age 3	\$700	\$420	\$280
Senior	\$800	\$480	\$320
Varsity	\$540	\$324	\$216

Championship Team Practice Fees:

States/Silver Practice	\$250	Days TBD
------------------------	-------	----------

YMCA Membership: provides accident and medical insurance at any Oneida Dolphins practice and YMCA Sanctioned meet. To see a full list of the benefits to your Y membership, please visit: ymcatrivalley.org.

USA Membership: (optional) It is required of all Oneida Dolphins that compete in USA Meets to have a current USA membership. This membership provides accident and medical insurance for every swimmer at any competition that is USA sanctioned. A summary of full coverage can be found on the USA Swimming website: www.usaswimming.org. A USA membership is valid from the start of the season until December 31, 2024. The cost of USA membership is \$91. Niagara Swimming offers an Outreach program and a reduced membership fee of \$7. Swimmers transferring from another USA team are responsible for paying the Niagara transfer fee of \$5.00.

Fundraising: Fundraising is a very important source of revenue for the club. Generating revenue through fundraising helps keep our seasonal dues as low as possible. Each Oneida Dolphins Swim Team family is encouraged to participate in fundraising activities to benefit the club. A full list of fundraisers can be found on the team website.

F. SWIM MEET INFORMATION- The Oneida Dolphins engage in a multi-level competitive program that attempts to provide challenging, yet success-oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and various abilities. At the start of each season, the Oneida Dolphins will meet to decide on which meets would be the most beneficial for the Oneida Dolphins swimmers. Distance, cost, array of events offered, and quality of meet are determining factors used to choose swim meets. The following describes our philosophy and expectations regarding meets:

Meet Participation: Swimmers are expected to make their **very best effort** to swim at every Y meet. Although each race is an individual event, this is a **TEAM** sport and the success of the team depends on each team member. Please keep this in mind as you schedule other events during the competitive part of the season.

Team Goal: We emphasize competition with oneself and **striving for personal best**. Winning ribbons, medals, or trophies are exciting, but not is not our main goal. The individual performances contribute to the team.

Goal Setting: Swimmers are taught to set realistic, yet challenging goals for themselves, and to bring those goals to practice to direct their training efforts and in meets.

Developing the whole swimmer: Swimmers are prepared and encouraged to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes. This promotes versatility and encourages the swimmer to explore his/her potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming. Coaches have specific reasons and rationales when scheduling swimmers for events. The coach has the ability to adjust and make changes; swimmers and parents do not. If a swimmer refuses to swim an event at a meet, he/she will be scratched for the remainder of the meet. Parents do not have the right to contact outside meet directors or coaches to attend meets without an Oneida coach present or make event changes without knowledge of the Oneida coach. Any event changes must be approved and submitted by the head coach of the team. Parents that fail to follow the proper chain of communication will result in the athlete being removed from the meet.

Meet Selections: The schedule for the season is developed with training cycles in mind. The Oneida Dolphins travel as a team. Swimmers are not permitted to attend additional meets outside the schedule set by the team.

Sportsmanship: Respect for officials, respect for other competitors, encouragement to teammates, and mature attitudes are examples of behaviors the coaching staff strives to instill in athletes. Sportsmanship is a priority of the team.

Transportation: Parents must arrange transportation to and from the meet.

Emergencies: In the case of an emergency the day of the meet, please call your coach so changes can be made.

Parent seating: Parents are NOT allowed on deck during the swim meet. The meet marshall reserves the right to ask you to leave.

In between events: In between races, swimmers are asked to rest and stay warm. All energy is to be stored up and used in competition. Having something warm and dry to wear is extremely helpful. A light, nutritious snack is recommended. Keep drinking fluids to stay hydrated.

Relay Assignments: Hours of preparation go into relay assignments. Splits of various legs of a race, effort, attitude, attendance, relay start timing, relay exchanges, and technique are some of the considerations when assigning a relay team. Parents and swimmers do NOT have the ability to change the order of a relay or an assignment. In the end, it is at the discretion of the head coach. If a parent or swimmer is protesting the relay assignment, the swimmer protesting will be removed from the relay and the alternate assigned will swim in his/her place.

Electronic devices: While technology is a gift, it is also a distraction. We encourage swimmers to enjoy their time with friends at the meet and avoid social media sites, texting with friends, etc.

Team Dress Code: Swimmers are required to wear their team suit and team cap at competition. Do not waste your money on a team suit that is too loose. Please order the size provided to you at orientation. The tight suit *is* supposed to feel uncomfortably tight. You don't want to hinder your swimmer's performance due to the drag of the swimsuit.

Organization for Competition

YMCA- Class placement is determined by the age of the swimmer on December 1st of the swim season. A swimmer's age on December 1st will determine their age the entire swim season. 8&under- Class E 9-10- Class D 11-12- Class C 13-14- Class B 15-19 Class A	USA- Swimmers will compete in the age group of their actual age on the first day of a meet.
---	---

Types of Meets

- **Dual Meets-** Oneida competes in the CNY YMCA Swim League, which includes the following YMCA teams: Auburn, Cortland, Fulton, Oneonta, Norwich, and Watertown. The swim season will include home and away meets (number determined when schedule is set by the League Commissioner). Oneida's home meets are held at the Oneida Family YMCA. Dual meets typically run about 4 hours depending on the size of the teams competing and the facility. Home meets require additional setup and cleanup time. All meets have a required warm-up period of one hour prior to the start of the meet.
- **CNY District Championship Meet** – All teams in the CNY District compete at the end of the season. All swimmers are expected to compete at this meet. Swimmers may swim in up to 4 events as selected by coaches. In order to qualify for this meet, swimmers **MUST** swim in at least 3 dual meets or 2 dual meets and 1 inter association meet throughout the season.
- **NYS YMCA Swimming Championships-** Includes swimmers from YMCA teams from all over NY. Swimmers must compete in at least 3 inter-association meets prior to attending States and meet qualifying time standards. Additional fees apply for championship season, meet entry, hotel stay, food, souvenirs, etc.
- **Y National Championship Meet-** Includes swimmers from all over the United States. Swimmers must meet qualifying standards in order to compete at this meet. Additional fees for meet entry, hotel stay, food, souvenirs, etc.
- **USA Swim Meets-** Our team is part of the Niagara Local Swimming Committee (LSC). USA offers additional opportunities for competition. A USA membership is required. Additional meet fees. Meets are held in the central NY area.
- **USA Silver Championships-** Qualifying standards apply. Additional fees for entry, hotel, food, souvenirs, etc. A swimmer **MUST** compete in ONE USA meet in the Niagara LSC to be eligible for this meet. **Only times recorded at USA meets will be valid at USA Silver Champs.** Times achieved at YMCA meets will NOT count at USA meets **UNLESS** it is declared a sanctioned meet by the host team's LSC from USA swimming.
- **USA Golds/ Open Championships-** The Oneida Dolphins do NOT attend these USA Championship Meets. The team trains and tapers swimmers to be at optimal performance for the NYS YMCA State Meet in March.

Out of Town Meets/Travel Policies

Trips to meets in other cities become an important and memorable aspect of a swimmer's career during their time with the team. When possible, the Oneida YMCA Dolphins will arrange to set aside a block of rooms at a special group rate which may be reserved by parents. Parents are responsible for hotel reservations. We will include a list of suggested hotels with meet information if available. Please read the Oneida Dolphins Travel Policy.

Meet Entry Procedure:

- **Y Dual Meets:** Coaches will enter swimmers in the meet. There is NO COST for a dual meet
- **USA Meets:** Email meet entries to Coach Emily (oneidadolphinscoach@gmail.com) by the deadline on the team calendar for each meet. Please wait for a final invoice to come out to pay your entry fees as posted on the team calendar (typically one week later). Our team is responsible for sending a meet file to the host team by a due date. Once your family commits to the meet, your family is responsible for paying all associated fees. Failure to do so will scratch your child from the meet and all future meets until the balance is paid. There are no refunds regardless of whether the swimmer competes in the meet or not.

G. PARENT VOLUNTEERING

"Many hands make light work." Our team would not be what it is without the help of our supportive families. Much of the behind the scenes work is done by our very own parents. We are always looking for parent help throughout the year and every parent is encouraged to volunteer. Based on your volunteer interests during registration at the start of the season, we have placed you in meet positions. Training will be provided for all positions! THANK YOU!

H. TEAM POLICIES & BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

Policies- please see and review all team policies on the team website.

I. COMMUNICATION

Communication between swimmers, coaches, and parents, is essential for the smooth functioning of the team (and your sanity!)

- **Oneida YMCA Dolphins Website:** The Dolphins Web Site is our primary source of communication and can be reached with any web browser at: **www.oneidadolphins.com**. We post as much as possible here - meet schedules, practice schedules and changes, fundraising, social events, etc. We encourage both parents and swimmers to regularly check the website.
- **Coach Emails:** Coach Emily will send out a weekly newsletter with updates/celebrations/special announcements by email on Sunday.
- **Facebook:** This serves as another way to connect family and friends of Dolphin swimmers. If you would like to suggest a "friend," please do so on our facebook page. Feel free to post appropriate photos, videos, and words of encouragement for our swimmers! We love seeing the positive messages from our supporters and fans! Photos are private and can only be seen by "friends" to protect the privacy of swimmers. Search: Oneida Dolphins
- **Instagram:** This communication piece is particularly popular with the pre-teen and teen swimmers. Search: oneida_dolphins to follow our team. Tag us in #oneidadolphins

Weather Cancellation Policy:

The Oneida Dolphins will practice as long as the YMCA is open. Please use your discretion prior to traveling. If the Y needs to close for any reason, families will be notified via email if a practice is canceled. There are no refunds or "make-ups" for canceled practices.

J.MEDICAL RELATED

PHYSICAL FORMS- Swimming is an intense physical activity and should be cleared by your doctor. Please provide an updated copy of your child's health record to help staff and coaches fully understand health

concerns or specific needs of your child. Please attach any additional medical action plans that the staff and coaches should be aware of.

MEDICATIONS- Although not required, we encourage families to send additional medication(s) (such as epipens or inhalers) to be added to the team's emergency medical kit in case medication is not in the swimmer's possession at the time of emergency.

K. PARENT AND SWIMMER AGREEMENT

The Oneida Dolphins Swim Team is dedicated to the families it serves. Getting involved with your child(ren)'s swimming experience is a great way to meet new people, have fun and be involved directly with the child(ren) at the same time. **HELP US TO CONTINUE TO MAKE THE PROGRAM A SUCCESS FOR OUR SWIMMERS – GET INVOLVED! STAY INFORMED! HAVE FUN, LEARN, AND GROW WITH US!**

This form is required for participation on the Oneida Dolphins Swim Team. **Once you have read through the General Handbook AND all club policies listed on the team website**, complete the electronic acknowledgement form for your swimmer and family.