



May 4, 2020

The Honorable Roy Cooper  
Governor of North Carolina  
via electronic mail only

Dear Governor Cooper,

Thank you for your reasonable and responsible leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. I have been very grateful that I live in North Carolina during this uncertain time.

I serve as the volunteer General Chair for North Carolina Swimming, the local branch of the sport's national governing body, USA Swimming. Our non-profit organization is comprised of 79 competitive swim clubs and 10,500 youth athletes. Our member clubs operate as small businesses who collectively employ 550 coaches and own or rent space in hundreds of aquatic facilities that employ many others such as lifeguards, janitorial staff, managers, etc. In addition to training young competitive swimmers, these clubs and aquatic facilities are the most significant providers of water safety and swim lessons that are absolutely critical for reducing accidental drownings in our state.

As you consider easing restrictions for Phase 1, please permit aquatic centers and pools to open on a limited basis for training and teaching activities. I am confident that our clubs can safely and responsibly resume training and teaching and remain well within the safety guidelines you set:

- The CDC has commented favorably on the value of the **aerobic exercise** swimming offers as well as on the **safe environment** a properly maintained pool provides in this time of COVID-19.
- Competitive swimming is a **no contact sport** and team practices are **supervised** by professional, certified coaches who will follow the state's guidelines on social distancing and masking and enforce even stricter best practices provided by their organizations, North Carolina Swimming, and USA Swimming.
- Training and teaching activities are **highly structured** and will be conducted in conformance with group limits and social distancing mandates. Coaches will not permit congregating in the water or facility.
- The **physical divisions** provided by lane lines and other deck areas will enable additional personal space. In fact, our organization is recommending social distances that are greater than 6 feet to provide even more protection.

Pools can be safely operated at limited capacity for training and teaching during Phase 1 as facilities in California and Florida are demonstrating. Doing so provides a valuable activity that benefits the physical and mental well being of our young swimmers as well as supporting employment, economic activity, and public health in communities across our state. Please include **aquatic centers and pools** in the list of businesses allowed to operate in Phase 1.

Very truly yours,

Trish Martin  
*General Chair*  
*North Carolina Swimming*  
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