



# USSSA COVID-19 ACTION PLAN

*“My course is set for  
an uncharted sea.”*

**DANTE ALIGHIERI**



## *We have all been thrust into uncharted seas.*

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We have no choice; this has come upon us whether we want it or not. We have dealt with the initial shock of Covid19. Now is the time to plan what our next steps are and how to prepare ourselves.

For about the last week or so, we have been a part of a number of calls and wanted the association to be able share best practices and what we envision we should be doing to reopen safely. This is why we are assembling best practices and resources. We realize that individual situations will be different. These will be dictated by local authorities, your physical plant, your community norms and how you teach your lessons. We envision this to be a living document that will benefit as we all learn what is working and what is not.

We would also like to thank those that helped in creating this document. We wish to thank the Aqua-Tots Corona Task force and Ron Sciarro for sharing their document. It was created with the help of CEO's from Goldfish, Emler, Hubbard and Cal Elite and others. Other input has been provided during zoom calls, research and phone calls. Miren Oca has also been a leader in trying to work through these ideas. Many others have contributed and if we missed you know that we appreciate every contribution. We are all smarter than any one of us. The task force chose the tagline of "Better together-Making a difference in our communities." We would also like to thank Liz Claytor and Sara Biskie for helping with this project.

We also see there is a two prong approach to take. First, we need to communicate and lobby with our local authorities to make sure we are able to open at an appropriate time. Many city and county pools are not going to open this year. Some of this is due to budget, some is due to concern over crowds gathering. We should work vigorously to make sure

we do not get lumped into this group. We need to provide our local authorities with the steps we will use to safely open. In order to do this we are working on a letter to use to lobby your governor, state legislature, county bodies and health departments. Whoever will be making the decision if pools can open in some phase of their reopening plan. You will find in this document a letter which you can edit and personalize to your situation. I urge you to take this step now. Don't wait. We would also urge you to band together with other swim groups and businesses in your area. Politicians are more likely to listen to a group. You may not have much luck initially but keep plugging away and eventually you will find a sympathetic ear. Enlist anyone who you think may be able to help you. Don't forget all your swim families that believe in you and want to see you succeed.

In Addendum A at the end of this document is a letter Liz Claytor from Splash Swim School is putting together for her county and state representatives in California. There is also a letter from Jon Alpert from Waterworks Aquatics that he had written for the governor of California. These are examples which you can edit and make it personal for you and your local situation.

Determine who will be making these decisions and start a dialogue. This is imperative so that you can open when allowed. If you are unsure where to start, your local Chamber of Commerce might be able to make some introductions or referrals for you. Realize also that you don't have to open if you are not ready or do not feel comfortable to open. But having options is preferable to not being able to open because of conditions that do not apply to your business.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

## **P5 | PRE-OPENING**

### **P6 | AREA 1**

#### ENTERING THE BUILDING PARKING LOT, FRONT DOOR AND ENTRY AREA

- Physical considerations for Front door and Customer Service Desk
- For Instructors - Entering the Building
- For Customer Service and Management - Entering the Building
- Customers - Entering the Building

### **P10 | AREA 2**

#### LOBBY - AREA AFTER ENTRY NOT INCLUDING ENTRY AREA, CHANGING ROOMS AND POOL

- Physical considerations for Lobby
- Chairs and Tables in Lobby Area
- Play Areas
- Retail Display Snack Bars and Drinks
- Instructors - Lobby
- Front Desk for Customer Service Team and Managers - Lobby/Customer Interaction
- Customer Flow in Lobby

### **P13 | AREA 3**

#### POOL ROOM

- Physical Considerations for Pool Room
- Instructors - Pool Room
- Customers - Pool Room

### **P15 | AREA 4**

#### CHANGING ROOMS AND BATHROOMS

### **P15 | AREA 5**

#### OFFICE ENVIRONMENT

### **P17 | ADDENDUM A**

#### LETTERS TO OFFICIALS

- Sample Letter 1
- Sample Letter 2
- Sample Letter 3

### **P21 | ADDENDUM B**

#### LIST OF CHEMICALS EFFECTIVE AGAINST COVID-19

# BEST PRACTICES FOR SWIM SCHOOLS

*An important disclaimer, we are gathering information from many sources. You must use your own knowledge and best judgment. If in doubt consult you local professionals and authorities.*

These best practices are being created April 26, 2020. You may or may not use them. Using these best practices in no way guarantees that communicable diseases, including but not limited to COVID-19 will not be present in a facility; that people actively infected with communicable diseases might be present in the facility nor does implementation of these best practices guarantee that a person or persons will not contract COVID-19 or other communicable diseases from persons or contact within such facility.

Before we get to the best practices we need to think about a few things. We need to make sure that our messaging to our families matches our actions. We need to make sure that these are actions we can do consistently and sustain for as long as needed.

As we talk about social distancing, realize that a 6ft radius circle has an area of 113 sq ft. This is one way to calculate how many people can be within your building. We need to calculate how many people we can have at a facility at a given time. Divide sq footage of the common area of the building by 113 if you chose to use that number. We don't think we can have 2000 children in our facility in the near term. So we need to come up with what we think our program will look like and that may make some of our best practices easier to define. With fewer people in the building and the pool, it may mean that we have fewer concerns about social distancing.

We also recognize that for all us there will be phases of opening. Conditions that exist on day one will be different 3 months in. So defining our conditions by phase may be a good exercise. We are currently hearing that about 65% of families are replying to surveys that they will return when we open. The association is preparing a survey you can use with your families. This survey should help us all understand better what our families expect.

We already know that they will expect us to have clean

facilities and that we will keep their children safe. That has not changed but we must show the cleaning and communicate what we are doing. We have to regain their trust as every business does.

The CDC does not consider properly maintained pool water to allow the spread of Covid-19. They are more concerned about proximity to people in our building; whether in lessons or in the lobby. It has been pointed out that this has not been proven. CDC acknowledged this. They are basing this on other coronaviruses such as SARS and MERS. The research is mostly being focused on testing and treatment. We may not see specific Covid-19 research for some time.

So with a phased open plan with occupancy numbers in place now we can determine how to best open our businesses back up. As you look at this list, remember that not all these will apply to your business. Feel free to add or subtract to the list to make it work in an effective and sustainable way for your business.

Things to consider are if you can have separate entrance and exit doors, what are areas that are congested and how can we minimize that. How can we reduce the amount of things that have to be touched in our building. Some of these will be easy, some of these will take some time. But think about how to do this in phase 1 of your open and how it might be modified as you go through subsequent phases. These best practices are written in the affirmative because that is easier. Edit to what will work best for you and your company.

One of the first things to do is appoint someone to be your COVID-19 officer. This can be you but make sure someone is following government and health agency news so that you are up to date on the most recent information. It is important to take the recommendations in this document and choose how your facility will respond. This can be the basis of an infectious disease action plan to have in a folder in case anything like this happens again. Could be a more localized infectious disease but better if you are prepared.

It is imperative that our employees feel safe coming back to work. If we do not have their trust then we will have much bigger problems. Get input from staff and make sure everyone is aware of what is being done to protect them.

## PRE-OPENING



- Create your new operational manual. Make sure it is all in writing and set your policies and expectations including any adjustments you are making to your staff sick leave policy. As well as procedures if you find out you haven't had a confirmed COVID-19 case on property. The CDC website has Resources for Businesses and Employers with this information.
- Make sure everyone is on the same page and consistent. Explain the how and why. Now is a good time to set up a group to work through how this will be implemented. Host the meeting virtually so that this can be in place.
- Make sure to assess the risks on an ongoing basis. This is a very fluid situation and we need to be nimble to keep moving forward.
- Once we have families back in our facility, How are things going? Are there any unintended consequences? Are there new threats?
- Host focus groups with your families to gauge their response to new steps.
- Create an implementation plan and educate your team members and families.
- Consider if you want to change your policies and waivers to include infectious diseases. Consult with your lawyer if you decide to add to your policies.

As far as customers, research is showing that they will endure a little inconvenience if they understand it is for their protection. So make sure you are telling your story and letting them know beforehand what has been changed and what it will look like for them to enter your business. Everyone does better with change if they are prepared for it.

# AREA 1

## ENTERING THE BUILDING- PARKING LOT, FRONT DOOR & ENTRY AREA

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### PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR FRONT DOOR AND CUSTOMER SERVICE DESK

- Signage in the parking lot to inform parents what to do.
- Minimize touch to enter the building. If you have powered doors, are you able to open without touching the actuator? You can add infrared to open the door but that could be a safety issue. If a child can cause the door to open without adult assistance, there would be a chance for the child to exit the building alone. You can add touchless actuators as well. Consider the option for a foot operated actuator or one that can be used with someone's elbow as you see in hospitals. Option would be to have someone open the door, who will also administer temperature checks if you are going to perform those. Important to provide appropriate PPE for these people and proper training to work this position.
- Need to protect customer service members at the front desk. Consider minimizing the number of those working at this position as you may have fewer customers in building. Can you route calls to phones that are not customer facing or if fewer customers there may be fewer calls.
- Consider acrylic shields for team members in this role. We have seen those that were attached to the counter. We have also seen a sheet of plexiglass hung from the ceiling by chain and s hooks if you do not want to damage the counter. We have also seen free standing shields but they tend to be more expensive. Barriers should be large enough so that if anyone were to sneeze it would protect your customer service team member. An alternative is to place an additional table or chairs in front of your front desk so that customers are at least 6 feet away from your customer service team members.
- If you have space, mark doors as enter and exit or use a different set of doors for entry and exit. Post signage if you are going to ask that those who have shown symptoms do not enter your building. On this sign, have the screening questions you are using and have a space for maximum occupancy. Leave the actual number blank so you can change it over time. Could have verbiage "Following state and county guidance in regards to number of people allowed to gather."
- Consider Cones or Tensa Barriers or chairs with ropes to demarcate inbound one way traffic and outbound one way traffic.
- Consider only allowing 1 parent per child into the building.
- Consider asking that families wait in their cars until just before time to enter for their lessons. Is there some sort of system that you can use to text them?
- Ask that students arrive in their swimsuits. May not be practical for babies but if we can reduce the amount of time that someone is in the building, the safer we will be.
- Need to mark 6 ft distance on the floor and in the parking lot if they are going to have to queue for getting temperature taken. Make sure markings have non-skid coating.
- Have arrows to guide them how to maintain safe distance and how to get into the pool if you have changed traffic patterns. If you decide to use stickers on the floor make sure they have a non skid coating.
- Consider requiring hand sanitizing for all parents and children entering the building.
- Need a touchless hand sanitizer dispenser at this location or a customer service member pumping sanitizer for customers.
- In every instance where hand sanitizers are mentioned, you can substitute hand washing. Hand sanitizer may be in short supply for sometime. There also may be a shortage of touchless sanitizer dispensers. If you use a local janitor supply, reach out to them. Cintas is a sponsor of the US Swim School Association and they also supply these items.
- Post signage about 20 second hand washing and proper technique near all lavatories and hand washing stations.

## AREA 1

# ENTERING THE BUILDING- PARKING LOT, FRONT DOOR & ENTRY AREA

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### FOR INSTRUCTORS - ENTERING THE BUILDING

- Staff are asked to arrive to shift in uniform and with face masks that have been provided by swim school.
- Staff is asked to bring minimum personal items. If possible only a towel and water bottle. It is suggested that staff leave additional personal items in vehicles or better yet at home.
- Customer Service/Greeter will meet staff at the front door and open the door to decrease touch points.
- Customer service members will ask the following questions of each staff member: First team member in the building will start the process. (This could also be something they answer on their personal phone as a form and submit to the company.) It would be possible to cover those that cannot work with paid leave with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
  - Have you been ill with fever, chills, cough, or body aches in the past 14 days?
  - Has anyone in your household had these symptoms in the past 14 days?
  - Have you or anyone in your household traveled internationally in the last 14 days?
  - Have you or anyone in your household traveled to a location in the United States where an increased incidence of COVID-19 has been reported in the last 14 days?
  - Have you been told by a healthcare provider that you should self quarantine due to a potential COVID-19 exposure or are you suspected of having COVID-19?
  - If your answer to any of these questions is yes, consider seeking medical advice and self quarantine. Notify your supervisor that you will not be able to work.
    - The reason behind this set of questions is being able to pre-screen people coming into our building. If we can eliminate those who are openly symptomatic or may have been exposed then we dramatically lessen the risk of infection in our building. This will lead to a better sense of safety for those inside the building. It will cut down on those who could carry the virus. It is not absolute. It is a further layer of protection.
- A customer service member will check staff's temperature at the front door to ensure the safety of all families and staff in the facility. If their temperature is at or above 100 degrees they will be asked to consider seeking immediate medical attention and not be allowed in the facility. You must consider next steps in order for them to return for work.
- A free-standing hand sanitizing station is at the front door for all staff entering the facility to utilize. If you cannot do this then you could also have someone dispense the hand sanitizer as they enter the building.
- Clocking in for shift should be hands free. If not possible then sanitizing wipes should be provided to wipe down the time clock device or laptop. Wipe down the device, clock in and then wipe down the device again.
- Everyone entering the pool room should use hand sanitizer or wash their hands before teaching classes.
- If employees are using lockers they should be wiped down before and after use.
- Roster and class rolls will be posted and instructors should prepare for classes.

# AREA 1

## ENTERING THE BUILDING- PARKING LOT, FRONT DOOR & ENTRY AREA

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### FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE AND MANAGEMENT - ENTERING THE BUILDING

- Staff are asked to arrive for their shift in uniform and with face masks provided by swim school.
- Staff is asked to bring minimum personal items. It suggested staff only bring water bottles. It is suggested that staff leave additional items at home or in their vehicle.
- A customer service member will greet staff at the front door and open the door to decrease touch points.
- Customer service members will ask the following questions of each staff member: First team member in the building will start the process. (This could also be something they answer on their personal phone as a form and submit to the company.) It would be possible to cover those that cannot work with paid leave with the Families First Coronavirus Response Act.
  - Have you been ill with fever, chills, cough, or body aches in the past 14 days?
  - Has anyone in your household had these symptoms in the past 14 days?
  - Have you or anyone in your household traveled internationally in the last 14 days?
  - Have you or anyone in your household traveled to a location in the United States where an increased incidence of COVID-19 has been reported in the last 14 days?
  - Have you been told by a healthcare provider that you should self quarantine due to a potential COVID-19 exposure or are you suspected of having COVID-19?
  - If your answer to any of these questions is yes, consider seeking medical advice and self quarantine. Notify your supervisor that you will not be able to work.
    - The reason behind this set of questions is being able to pre-screen people coming into our building. If we can eliminate those who are openly symptomatic or may have been exposed then we dramatically lessen the risk of infection in our building. This will lead to a better sense of safety for those inside the building. It will cut down on those who could carry the virus. It is not absolute. It is a further layer of protection.
- A customer service member will check staff's temperature at the front door to ensure the safety of all families and staff in the facility. If their temperature is at or above 100 degrees they will be asked to consider seeking immediate medical attention and not be allowed in the facility. You must consider next steps in order for them to return for work.
- A free-standing hand sanitizing station is at the front door for all staff entering the facility to utilize. If you cannot do this then you could also have someone dispense the hand sanitizer as they enter the building.
- Clocking in for shift should be hands free. If not possible then sanitizing wipes should be provided to wipe down the time clock device or laptop. Wipe down the device, clock in and then wipe down the device again.
- Each customer service member is assigned a position to work during their shift. Once assigned the customer service member will use supplied wipes to clean all their equipment, including keyboards and phones, at the start of shift and at end of shift.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided for staff to utilize.

## AREA 1

### ENTERING THE BUILDING- PARKING LOT, FRONT DOOR & ENTRY AREA



#### CUSTOMERS - ENTERING THE BUILDING

- A customer service representative will greet the customer at the front door and open the door for their family, to decrease touch points.
  - A customer service representative will check the customer's temperature (if you decide to do this or if dictated by local authorities) at the front door to ensure the safety of all families and staff in the facility. If their temperature is over 100 degrees, suggest they seek medical care and do not allow them to enter the building. (Need to establish what next steps are for this and review your makeup policies as well as consider staggered start times to minimize lineups at the entry door).
  - A free standing hand sanitizer station is at the front door for everyone who enters to use or customer service representative to dispense. Decide if you are going to require all to use or just place prominently.
  - Request confirmation of correct/updated contact information for all customers entering the building so you are able to contact everyone in the event you need to notify them of a later confirmed case. Keep accurate records of who is in the building at what day/times.
- Signage before someone enters the building asking the following questions:
    - Have you been ill with fever, chills, cough, or body aches in the past 14 days?
    - Has anyone in your household had these symptoms in the past 14 days?
    - Have you or anyone in your household traveled internationally in the last 14 days?
    - Have you or anyone in your household traveled to a location in the United States where an increased incidence of COVID-19 has been reported in the last 14 days?
    - Have you been told by a healthcare provider that you should self quarantine due to a potential COVID-19 exposure or are you suspected of having COVID-19?
    - If your answer to any of these questions is yes, consider seeking medical advice and self quarantine.
      - The reason behind this set of questions is being able to pre-screen people coming into our building. If we can eliminate those who are openingly symptomatic or may have been exposed then we dramatically lessen the risk of infection in our building. This will lead to a better sense of safety for those inside the building. It will cut down on those who could carry the virus. It is not absolute. It is a further layer of protection.

## AREA 2

### LOBBY, AREA AFTER ENTRY NOT INCLUDING ENTRY AREA, CHANGING ROOMS & POOL

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#### PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR LOBBY

- Markers denoting 6 ft social distancing should be placed on the floor in front of the front desk. A sign should be located at the end of the line communicating that if all the floor markers are occupied please wait in a chair in the lobby until there is a marker spot in line available.
- The marker directly on the floor in front of the front desk should be placed 6 feet back. Some of these considerations were covered in the last section. You may want to utilize an acrylic shield in front of your customer service team members. You can also utilize a table, chairs or similar in front of the front desk in order to create a physical barrier. The goal would be to create 6 feet of separation. Barring that then an acrylic or plexiglass barrier would provide protection for team members in this area.
- If you have chairs in this area consider reducing the number of them. Consider if you have diminished capacity due to social distancing then reducing chairs will be easy. Consider marking where chairs go by using tape on the floor to denote 6 feet. If your chairs do not move consider signage and tape on chairs to mark social distancing. If you have benches then perhaps one family per bench or a staggering so that no one is too close together. Allow parents to view their child's lesson comfortably with safety precautions in place. You could also consider a service such as USSSA Sponsor, SpotTV to allow for remote viewing of lessons.
- Don't run fans in this area in the near term as there is uncertainty how the virus is transmitted in the air. The less stirring of air the less chance of spreading the virus.
- All shared items should be removed from the front desk. This would include pens, flyers, business cards etc. Every team member should have their own supply of these items. If pens must be used they should be wiped down before and after use. Remember especially anything we touch with our hands should be sanitized.
- Touchless hand sanitizer should be provided every 10 feet or so. If we can have it available conspicuously then the perception will be that it is used frequently.
- Drinking fountains don't have clear indications. We have seen them placed out of order in retail establishments. May need guidance from your local health department if they are requiring them in order to operate. The water itself is not the issue. The issues seem to be touching the button or bar to make water come out. The other issue is putting your face near a surface that could contain the virus. Could be overcome with disposable cups and wipes to use to operate drinking fountains. Be sure to provide a waste receptacle if you go this route.
- Consider getting rid of lost and found for the near term. Especially for clothing items. Do not shake any towels or clothing items as this could put virus in the air.
- Customers may be very sensitive to hygiene for some time and anything that even looks messy could translate to unclean in their minds. Now more than ever it is important that everyone's dress, hair, nails as well as work areas that customers can see are tidy and spotless.

#### CHAIRS AND TABLES IN LOBBY AREA

- All seating in the lobby will be adjusted to abide by the social distancing guidelines. They should be monitored. Family groups can sit together but enforce social distancing for all others.
- Chairs and tables should be sanitized on a regular basis. Customers should see these measures and be educated on them. Much like seeing tables at a restaurant being wiped down. Interval will depend on how many times new families are entering the space at least several times an hour. Provide sanitizing wipes and paper towels for those who want to wipe down their own chairs. Provide waste can for used wipes and towels and remove waste frequently.

## AREA 2

### LOBBY, AREA AFTER ENTRY NOT INCLUDING ENTRY AREA, CHANGING ROOMS & POOL



#### PLAY AREAS

- Remove all small toys and close the play area.

#### RETAIL DISPLAY SNACK BARS AND DRINKS

- Retail displays should be moved off the sales floor or placed off limits. Consider creating an online store or only allow customer service team touch items.
- If you sell food, consider suspending sales for the near term. If you are going to continue selling food, check expiration dates as we have been closed for a period of time and some foods may be past expiration date. Maybe limit food to only prepackaged foods.
- Decide how you will handle it if someone wants to try on a swimsuit.
- Touch areas of vending machines should be part of your cleaning process or consider removing your vending machine completely.

#### INSTRUCTORS - LOBBY

- Instructors should maintain 6 ft social distancing and hand washing/sanitizing regimen in this area. They should spend little time here. They should only transit as necessary.

#### FRONT DESK FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE TEAM AND MANAGERS - LOBBY/CUSTOMER INTERACTION

- Review physical considerations above. The goal is to protect everyone in our facilities. We can best do this by enforcing social distancing. By the time we get open most families will be accustomed to this. By using physical barriers, we can accomplish this. Follow local directives concerning masks and other requirements.
- Consider only allowing credit/debit card transactions if your software will do this. Consider not allowing cash transactions in the near term. PINs are not required for most transactions any longer. The major credit card companies also do require signatures.
- Try to minimize paper forms. Try to convert to electronic and have them fill out on their own devices. Remember if you still have to use clipboards or pens those should be sanitized before and after each use.
- Consider offering a hygienic option for swimmers to store their masks while in lessons, for example a small paper bag with a sticker or an envelope.
- Make sure everyone is assigned a station and only works from that station. Clean the station before and after each shift. Wash hands at intervals throughout the shift.

## AREA 2

### LOBBY, AREA AFTER ENTRY NOT INCLUDING ENTRY AREA, CHANGING ROOMS & POOL



#### CUSTOMER FLOW IN LOBBY

- Families are asked to only have one adult family member accompany each student to their swim lessons and for students to arrive dressed for lessons.
- Families will be asked not to arrive prior to 5 minutes before their scheduled class time. If families arrive early, they will be asked to wait in designated areas either inside the facility or outside the facility depending on physical layout of the facility. Wherever we are asking them to wait; there should be signage to denote 6 foot isolation. They could wait in chairs if you are able to maintain social distancing in your waiting area.
- Once they enter the facility, they will sit in the lobby and wait at a seat with their parent until called by name to enter the pool room.
- Consider suspending use of necklaces, wristbands or cards used to identify which child is assigned to which class. In phase 1, with fewer students in the building we should be able to get them to proper class.
- Consider suspending use of any kiosks or other methods that require touch for customers to access classes.
- Students will be called to class by customer service team members who will hold doors for them and direct them to their classes. Consider ways to create 1 way traffic on your pool deck so that we don't have students crossing each other's path. Optionally, you could schedule a break between when classes end and when the next classes start.
- At the end of class, parents will return to the door that the child entered into the pool room to retrieve their child. There will be marking on the floor to indicate where they should stand to ensure they are 6 feet apart.
- No interaction between teacher and parents at this time. Need to determine how to manage communication with parents during this time.
- If it is necessary for a family to use a dressing room or bathroom they may do so at this time. Consider closing some changing rooms and bathrooms if you are unable to maintain social distancing. Consider a system used in some clothing stores of having a dressing room assigned and then cleaned before it can be used again. Some type of card could indicate a room is available for use. Card could be turned from green to red to indicate it needs to be cleaned before it can be used again.

## AREA 3

### POOL ROOM



#### PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR POOL ROOM

- Remove all small toys that have holes or have a soft texture.
  - Clean all hard toys, such as dive rings etc after each use. They should be cleaned in a sanitizing solution (1 part Clorox and 3 parts water) allowed to sit for 30 minutes and rinsed over drains that go to the sewer each time they are used. May mean purchasing additional toys so they can be rotated.
  - Consider discontinuing the loaning of goggles in the near term.
  - Maintain proper pool chemistry. Consider computer controllers if you do not already have. From the CDC, properly maintained water is not the worry. It is the proximity of people. Chlorine is between whatever your community minimum typically 1.0, consider at least 1.5 PPM and 3.0 PPM. This gives a little extra chlorine to make sure everyone is safe.
  - Maintaining social distancing is going to be the most challenging in the pool. We are currently asked to maintain 6 ft between everyone. We need to work to understand how to keep instructors and children safe under these new guidelines.
- We can lower our capacity for those that were teaching group lessons. If we are mandated to have smaller groups in our buildings, then we may have to start our phase 1 with a reduction of class size from between 75% to 50%. If you already teach with 1 or 2 children per instructor, this is not necessary. This will facilitate overall physical distancing and the potential of lower overall building capacities. Also be aware that children that share the same household would be fine in the same class.
  - We could bring parents into the water to work with children at the direction of the instructor. Not sure of the ratio here but could allow greater ratio still keeping parents 6 feet from each other and instructor. If everyone could stand on the bottom and be in a circle with an instructor in the middle.
  - Older children who have more advanced skills could be in the first phase with the instructor on deck and students maintaining social distancing. More of a squad type practice.
  - Infant toddler with parents could be taught as a group if you have enough water to maintain social distancing.

## AREA 3

### POOL ROOM

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#### PHYSICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR POOL ROOM

- Protection for instructors
  - This will require the most thought. COVID-19 is a respiratory illness. It is spread between people who are in close contact and through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. It is possible to get COVID-19 by touching a surface with the virus and then touching your face.
  - There are a number of strategies for protecting our instructors. Ultimately, you will have to choose what will work best for your team and based on local guidelines. Most of us are out of our pools making it harder to test these. This list is cumbersome. It will be important to solicit instructor input and customer input. Also consider what are local norms and expectations.
  - Here are some of the strategies that we have heard:
    - Use of a cloth mask or neck gaiters possibly adding clear adult swim goggles or a swim mask or a face shield . This would cover mouth, nose and eyes. These are 3 areas of concern for infection. It remains to be seen how effective these will be. There are manufacturers making these out of swimsuit material. Need to make sure that this solution is comfortable for instructors. Instructors must be taught how to safely put them on and take them off. There are some manufacturers that are custom printing these. Also consider hygienic options for staff to store multiple masks in the event they get wet or need cleaning.
    - Use of clear face shields with cloth mask or neck gaiter. This will create a barrier which would protect from coughing and sneezing combined with chlorinated water.
    - Use of a full face mask like the Cressi Duke. This would protect eyes, nose and mouth. Jury out on comfort. Instructor would be a bit muffled, maybe no more than with cloth over their mouth. Advantage of seeing the whole face. This would not require a cloth face mask.
    - Whatever eye protection is being used, the advice we are hearing is that you should cover the mouth and the nose with a barrier. Consult with your experts on this. You will need to work with your

instructors to make sure they are on board with your choice. They have to be comfortable physically and emotionally. They need to learn how to wear the gear and how to put it on and take it off safely. You will also need to let your parents know what you have chosen and design strategy so that children know about changes and don't have to see it the first time they come back to lessons.

- Remove larger toys for now if not essential. If essential then devise cleaning procedures after each use.
- Clean and sanitize the pool deck on a regular schedule.

#### INSTRUCTORS - POOL ROOM

- Instructors will be assigned one zone in the pool to work in for their entire shift.
- Curriculum should be adjusted to deter face to face contact and assist with distancing guidelines.
- Breath control skills should be performed with students blowing to the side.
- Curriculum should be adjusted so that the instructor is not face to face with the student but modified to the side.
- Instructor student ratios should be modified to reflect how many people can be allowed in building at one time.
- Consider creating instructor teams that work the same shifts so if there is a possible infection that team can self quarantine without impacting other teams.

#### CUSTOMERS - POOL ROOM

- If parents are on the pool deck make sure to maintain social distancing.
- If parents come on deck consider whether they should wear masks.

## AREA 4

### CHANGING ROOMS & BATHROOMS

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- Swimsuit dryers, hair blow dryers and hand dryers should not be available.
- Switch to paper towels in the near term and ensure you have enough trash receptacles that get emptied often. Consider touchless dispensers if possible.
- Consider touchless faucets as well.
- See earlier notes on Changing Rooms. Consider using every other one or assigning dressing rooms and cleaning dressing rooms after every use. Consider having disinfectant available in each changing room with signage to encourage cleaning after each use.
- Clean every surface several times an hour.
- Signage should be created to explain and support all social distancing efforts in the facility. The goal is to explain the why behind what you are doing.

## AREA 5

### OFFICE ENVIRONMENT

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- Limit the number of people in the office area and maintain social distancing. Consider creating teams that work together so if one person in a team comes down with symptoms, another team can step in while exposed team members self quarantine.
- Assign workstations and make sure they are cleaned before and after a shift.
- Sanitizer and wipes should be available in this area.
- Determine local guidance on whether masks should be worn in this area.
- Make sure everyone in this area has observed protocol to enter the building, i.e. if you are going to do screening and take temperatures.

These are the main areas that we feel need to be addressed. We have tried to be thorough. You may feel like there are things that you think are not necessary for your community. That is fine. If you wish to add that is fine as well. We felt like we would like to provide too much information rather than not enough. Take what you want and most importantly be true to your school and your community. As we work our way through this, there will be differences throughout the country and even in the same cities. That is why you may have found things that don't apply to your business. The main thing we have learned as we have educated ourselves about this is to maintain social distancing. This appears to be the main concern of everyone grappling with this situation. If you pay attention to that you should be fine.

*Good luck on implementing your own plan. Please reach out to us if we can help.*



Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Liz Claytor, and I am the owner of Splash Swim School, a learn to swim program with commercial facilities in San Ramon and Walnut Creek, California. We provide year-round, indoor swim lessons to children, ages six months and up, and we have taught thousands of children to swim since we opened for lessons in 2006.

I am writing regarding the re-opening of business and the community during the COVID-19 pandemic. I understand that discussions at various levels of State and local governments are underway, detailing when and how life may begin to return to some sense of normal, and I am asking you to consider the public health need for swim schools to reopen at the earliest possible time. Given the unique aspects of our operations as well as the essential community service we provide, I would appreciate the opportunity to participate in that dialogue.

Our industry has always and will forever continue to believe that swim lessons are an essential part of every child's life, especially in California where there are swimming pools and bodies of water everywhere. Drowning is the number one cause of death for children ages 1-4, and a leading cause for kids up to 14 years old.<sup>1</sup> In California alone, we average 51 deaths each year of children under four due to drowning,<sup>2</sup> and the CDC believes that for every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency care for near drowning.<sup>3</sup> The most tragic thing of all is that drowning is preventable. We know that swim lessons add an important layer of protection, and the NIH has found that formal swim lessons decrease the risk of drowning for young children by 88%.<sup>4</sup> May is National Water Safety Month, and as the current order stands, this will be the first time in nearly 15 years that Splash will not be able to practice this message with our students. Water safety and drowning prevention is our passion and life's work, and we need to get back to it.

We believe this to be more true than ever in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been a very uncertain time for a number of reasons, but what is certain is that our children are more at risk than ever. Shelter in place orders mean that children now have an abundance of time to find bodies of water both in and out of the home, and we know that all it takes is a couple of inches.<sup>5</sup> Compounding the problem, parents now have a whole host of added distractions, such as managing a full-time household, being forced into the role of a homeschool teacher, trying to telework and/or restructuring to survive in the face of unemployment. Any of these distractions alone is enough to create opportunity for a child to get to water unsupervised.

Given the life-saving nature of our business, Splash is anxious to get back to work at the earliest possible time. However, our business has some unique characteristics which will require consideration before we can resume operations of our water safety programs:

First, the very nature of our work makes social distancing requirements impracticable in most cases and a safety hazard for those children who need our lessons the most. To put it plainly, an instructor cannot be 6 feet away from a four year old who cannot swim.

Second, we are concerned with the application of mask requirements for our instructors, as wet fabric against the face will likely prove to be a safety hazard. We have begun investigating face shields as an alternative for instructor use and are willing to discuss that option further.

Lastly, guidance issued by the CDC suggests that chlorine kills the virus that causes COVID-19, and there is no evidence that the virus can be spread through pools.<sup>6</sup> By working in properly chlorinated water, a swim school environment may be safer from COVID-19 than other business environments where critical work surfaces and equipment are not in constant contact with a disinfecting substance.

*Continued on next page...*

Notwithstanding, distance between instructor and child, as well as instructor face coverings, we understand that we will need to adopt various mitigation measures to protect our customers and staff. We are willing to engage in a science-based dialogue with health officials regarding which measures might be appropriate for our industry.

In closing, we believe there is currently a void in services crucial to the safety of the children in our communities, and we appreciate the opportunity to discuss how we may resume operations as shelter orders are loosened. I am available to discuss further at your convenience. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Liz Claytor  
President & CFO  
Splash Swim School, Inc.  
liz@splashswimschool.com  
510.610.1152 m

<sup>1</sup> "Drowning Prevention Toolkit - AAP.org." <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/campaigns/drowning-prevention/Pages/default.aspx>. Accessed 28 Apr. 2020.

<sup>2</sup> "2019 Drowning Prevention Message From Governor Gavin ...." <https://www.dds.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2019-Drowning-Prevention-Message-From-Governor-Gavin-Newsom.pdf>. Accessed 28 Apr. 2020.

<sup>3</sup> "Unintentional Drowning: Get the Facts | Home and ... - CDC." <https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalsafety/water-safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html>. Accessed 28 Apr. 2020.

<sup>4</sup> "Association Between Swimming Lessons and Drowning in ...." <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4151293/>. Accessed 29 Apr. 2020.

<sup>5</sup> "Water Safety (for Parents) - Nemours KidsHealth." <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/water-safety.html>. Accessed 29 Apr. 2020.

<sup>6</sup> "Water and COVID-19 FAQs | CDC." 23 Apr. 2020, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>. Accessed 28 Apr. 2020.

## ADDENDUM A LETTERS TO OFFICIALS

### SAMPLE LETTER 2

Letter from Jon Alpert of Waterworks Aquatics  
It is intended for a governor

Dear Governor Newsom,

I am writing to you to ask you to consider swim schools and learn-to-swim programs as being part of the next phase of businesses to reopen. Learning to swim is a life or death skill. Drowning is the number one cause of death for children ages 1 to 4 and a leading cause for young people up to 14 years of age. We believe drowning to be at an even higher risk now as the schools, daycares and other children's activities are currently closed giving the children more time to find a body of water such as a filled bathtub, backyard pool, neighbor's pool, community pool, inflatable pool, sink, toilet, bucket, ditches filled with rain water, ocean, lakes, and rivers. A child can drown in less than 2 inches of water.

Meanwhile, parents have even more distractions than ever and are unable to supervise their children at all times. We understand that modifications will need to be put in place once our swim schools/learn to swim programs reopen. An Instructor teaching a child that does not know how to swim will need to stay in a reachable distance from that child. We are committed and will take concrete steps to ensure social distancing within all other aspects of our facilities. We are willing to engage in a science-based dialog with health officials regarding which measures would be appropriate for our industry.

According to the CDC, the Chlorine/Bromine in our swimming pools should inactivate the virus in the water. Chlorine/Bromine is a disinfectant. There is no evidence that the virus that causes COVID-19 to be spread to people through the water in pools.

We feel teaching swimming is essential to keeping our children safe. If you have any questions, I would be more than happy to answer them. We look forward to working together to keep our children and communities safe and protected. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Jon Alpert  
Waterworks Aquatics

April 29, 2020

Dear Governor Newsom,

We are writing to ask you to consider the serious public health need to open swim schools and learn-to-swim programs in Phase 2 of businesses to reopen.

As you know, learning to swim is a life-or-death skill, essential for every child. Formal swim lessons between ages 1 and 4 can help reduce the risk of drowning by 88% according to a study conducted in 2015.<sup>1</sup> Drowning is the number one cause of death for children ages 1 to 4 and a leading cause for young people up to 14 years of age.<sup>2</sup> We believe drowning to be at an even higher risk now as the schools, daycares and other children's activities are currently closed. This gives children more time to find a body of water such as a backyard pool, neighbor's pool, community pool, inflatable pool, sink, toilet, filled bathtub, bucket, ditches filled with rain water, ocean, lakes, and rivers. A young child can drown in less than 2 inches of water.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, parents have even more distractions than ever, including remote working while children are home and are unable to supervise their children at all times. Even before this pandemic, 9 out of 10 child related drowning deaths happened when a caregiver was supervising.<sup>4</sup> 69% of children who drowned were not expected to be at or in the pool, yet they were found in the water and 77% of drowning victims had been out of sight for less than five minutes.<sup>5</sup>

Private swim schools in California educate over XXXX of children per week to learn to swim and unlike public pools, our programs are controlled learning environments. We understand that modifications will need to be put in place once swim schools/learn-to-swim programs reopen. While an instructor needs to stay within a reachable distance from a nonswimmer, we are committed to taking concrete steps to ensure social distancing within all other aspects of our facilities.

There is no way to teach water survival or swim skills remotely, and the health risk from COVID-19 in instructional settings should be very low. According to the CDC, the chlorine/bromine in our swimming pools should inactivate the virus in the water. Chlorine/bromine is a disinfectant. There is no evidence that the virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread to people through the water in pools. The industry is working to establish best practices, and we are willing to engage in a science-based dialogue with health officials regarding which measures would be appropriate for learn-to-swim programs.

As a fellow parent of young children, we hope you will agree that teaching swimming is essential to keeping our children safe. If you have any questions, we would be more than happy to answer them. We look forward to working together to reduce the risks to our children and communities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa M. Zarda, CAE  
Executive Director  
United States Swim School Association

Adam B. Katchmarchi, Ph.D., EMT-B  
Executive Director  
National Drowning Prevention Alliance

Sabeena Hickman, CAE  
President & CEO  
Pool & Hot Tub Alliance

Michelle Kavanaugh  
Executive Director  
California Pool & Spa Association

Jim Spiers  
President  
Stop Drowning Now

<sup>1</sup> Association Between Swimming Lessons and Drowning in Childhood, A Case-Control Study: Ruth Brenner, et al., 2015 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4151293/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.aap.org/en-us/about-the-aap/aap-press-room/campaigns/drowning-prevention/Pages/default.aspx>

<sup>3</sup> [https://downloads.aap.org/DOPA/Drowning-Prevention/is\\_your\\_baby\\_crawling\\_english.pdf](https://downloads.aap.org/DOPA/Drowning-Prevention/is_your_baby_crawling_english.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Research from National SAFEKIDS campaign, <https://www.cnn.com/2004/HEALTH/05/27/drowning/>

<sup>5</sup> Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) <https://www.momsteam.com/sports/swimming/safety/grim-statistics-on-child-drownings>

## ADDENDUM B

# LIST OF CHEMICALS EFFECTIVE AGAINST COVID-19

The EPA maintains a list of cleaners that are approved (List N). Here is the link to look up any EPA approved disinfectants: <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>

Remember to read all labels and follow the uses and instructions on the label. The label is the law. Your local janitor supply company is also a good source of information.

One recommended option from a Cleaning and Restoration Industry professional: BotaniClean™ Disinfectant <https://www.legendbrandsrestoration.com/Products/BotaniClean-Disinfectant>

Features a unique, nature-inspired thymol blend, the product is EPA registered as a Category IV low-toxicity disinfectant, requiring no warning labels and no PPE. BotaniClean has demonstrated effectiveness against viruses similar to SARS-CoV-2 (as the surrogate for COVID-19) under the current EPA Emerging Pathogens Standard, so is included on List N: Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2 (listed under EPA no. 34810-25). Canadians: Refer to the Health Canada website for more information.

If you change any of the chemicals that you are using in your facility make sure that you update your MSDS binder. The supplier or the manufacturer will have an MSDS sheet for any of their products. Remember these have to be available for your employees and also OSHA will want to see if they come to your building.

Here is a list of chemicals that are best for combating the virus shared from USA Swimming. Cleaning-Best for combating virus:

- Clorox Commercial Solutions Disinfecting Bio Stain & Odor Remover
- Clorox Pet Solutions Advanced Disinfecting Stain & Odor Remover
- Lysol Hydrogen Peroxide Action Multi-Purpose Cleaner, Oxygen Splash
- Lysol Hydrogen Peroxide Bathroom Cleaner, Cool Spring Breeze
- Lysol Hydrogen Peroxide Multi-Purpose Cleaner, Citrus Sparkle Zest

- Lysol Hydrogen Peroxide Multi-Purpose Cleaning Wipes, Oxygen Splash
- Lysol Power Bathroom Cleaner, Island Breeze
- Purell Multi Surface Disinfectant, Fragrance Free
- Seventh Generation Disinfectant Spray, Eucalyptus, Spearmint & Thyme
- Seventh Generation Disinfectant Spray, Fresh Citrus & Thyme
- Seventh Generation Disinfectant Spray, Lavender Vanilla & Thyme
- Seventh Generation Disinfecting Bathroom Cleaner, Lemongrass Citrus Scent
- Seventh Generation Disinfecting Multi-Surface Cleaner, Lemongrass Citrus Scent
- Seventh Generation Disinfecting Wipes, Lemongrass Citrus Scent
- Windex Multi Surface Disinfectant Cleaner
- Windex Multi Surface Disinfectant Cleaner, Glade Rainshower

Safer active ingredients:

- Hydrogen peroxide
- Ethyl alcohol (ethanol)
- Citric acid
- L-lactic acid
- Caprylic acid (octanoic acid)
- Thymol

When considering a product, read the labels and be on the lookout for these ingredients that may be best to avoid.

*Sodium hypochlorite: EWG notes that this is "linked to harm to the skin and respiratory system and the environment. When improperly mixed with other cleaners or acids, sodium hypochlorite can be fatally poisonous." It is also found in chlorine bleach.*

*Quaternary ammonium compounds: Also known as quats, which, according to EWG, are linked to asthma and suspected of causing reproductive toxicity and birth defects in humans. They also take an environmental toll.*

*Hydrogen peroxide and vinegar mixed together: the combination forms caustic peracetic acid.*

*No cleaning products used in or around a pool should contain ammonia. This causes pool-water quality issues.*