

Ohio Swimming/Lake Erie Swimming



May 8, 2020

The Honorable Mike DeWine
Riffe Center, 30th Floor
77 South High Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Governor DeWine:

Thank you for your leadership during this unprecedented time. We are writing on behalf of Ohio Swimming and Lake Erie Swimming. The two organizations are responsible for governing members of USA Swimming, our national governing body for competitive swimming, within the state of Ohio. Between the two organizations we represent approximately 11,500 athletes, coaches, officials, and non-athlete members of USA Swimming throughout the state of Ohio.

We understand that you are faced with leading the state through an extremely challenging time. We applaud your efforts and the care you are showing for the citizens of Ohio. As you review the various sectors of businesses to reopen, we wanted to make sure that competitive swimming had an independent voice separate from recreational aquatic facilities that may be delayed in opening due to the difficulty with ensuring social distancing guidelines.

The CDC has stated that properly maintained pools (chemicals) are likely to kill the virus that causes COVID-19. If we combine this environment with proper social distancing, we believe that we can offer our members a very safe environment to get back to exercise and training. Therefore, we have devised a standard protocol for our clubs to use when bringing athletes back into the pool. This protocol has been devised with guidance from USA Swimming, and similar protocols are being introduced in other parts of the country. An example of the implementation of the protocol is with the Mission Viejo Nadadores. They have 800 athletes in Mission Viejo, California and began practices last week.

We understand that collaboration between our members, public health officials, and facility operators is vital to safely use the aquatic facilities in the state to promote physical and mental health opportunities that are compliant with public health directives. We request that you review our protocol and consider the possibility of allowing our athletes the opportunity to start back to training as soon as possible. As you read through the protocol, please note that each club will use this as a template but will make necessary adjustments based on their specific training facility. Each club would be required to submit their specific protocol to our offices as well as their local health department and any other agency that you deem necessary.

We would like to offer our assistance and expertise in any future discussions on the reopening of our sector. Thank you for your time, consideration and tireless work during this unprecedented time.

Sincerely,

Todd Billhimer

Todd Billhimer
Ohio Swimming Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vince Colwell".

Vince Colwell
Lake Erie General Chair

cc: Jon Husted, Lt. Governor
Dr. Amy Acton, Director, Department of Health

Health & Wellness Re-Entry Protocol

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

There is no evidence that the virus that causes COVID-19 can be spread to people through the water in pools, hot tubs, spas, or water play areas. Proper operation and maintenance (including disinfection with chlorine and bromine) of these facilities should inactivate the virus in the water.



A MESSAGE FROM USA SWIMMING

We believe swimming, like walking, hiking, running, and cycling, is a critical healthy activity within our communities. Swimming does not require direct contact between teammates or coaches and social distancing can be maintained throughout practice. As with all exercise and activity at this time, swimming must comply with standards for social distancing and safety within aquatic facilities. We know, with collaboration between USA Swimming coaches, public health officials, and facility operators we can create safe plans for using aquatic facilities to promote physical and mental health opportunities compliant with public health directives. The CDC has indicated that there is no evidence the disease spreads through treated water. Proper operation and maintenance (including disinfection with chlorine and bromine) of these facilities should inactivate the virus in the water.

A MESSAGE FROM OHIO AND LAKE ERIE SWIMMING

Ohio and Lake Erie Swimming recognizes that swimmers can continue to train and compete safely in accordance with appropriate safety protocols. While the safety of our swimmers will always be of paramount importance, we also recognize the importance of resuming swimming to promote health and fitness, as well as to ensure that swimmers seeking to compete at the college and national levels have an opportunity to pursue their goals. Based on guidance from health officials, the CDC, and USA Swimming, we are providing this re-entry protocol to our member teams. We recognize that each team may need to modify this protocol slightly based on the facility in which it trains, but we believe this protocol should be followed as closely as possible to ensure that appropriate safety measures are in place for our swimmers.

Effective **Enter Date provided by state officials**

PRACTICE SCHEDULING

1. Lane reservation: A schedule will be established for practices that will **control the number of people present in the facility to meet state social distancing guidelines.**
2. Number of Participants: Based on current state and CDC policy, a set number of swimmers per practice session will be identified and enforced – see charts below.

ENTRY and EXIT PROCEDURES

1. Locker rooms will be closed. Athletes must arrive with their swimsuits on.
2. Athletes may not enter the facility early.
3. When entering and exiting, all individuals must maintain appropriate social distancing of at least six feet.
4. Athletes will enter and exit through designated areas.
5. Entries and exits will be marked with signs reminding all individuals to maintain appropriate safety protocols.
6. An assigned coach or staff member shall survey athletes and coaches entering the facility. If they are symptomatic in any way, the athlete or coach will not be permitted to enter the facility. Symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and difficulty breathing, or other symptoms identified by the CDC – see daily entry survey.
7. Athletes must leave with swimsuit on.
8. Athletes must shower at home.
9. Athletes may not congregate after practice.
10. A 15-minute block between sessions will be scheduled. The 15-minute block will be designated to disinfect the area before the next group of swimmers enters the facility.

PARENT PROTOCOL

1. One parent per swim family may enter the facility if the space is large enough to maintain social distancing.
2. Parents must maintain proper social distancing protocol.
3. Parents may not use locker rooms or water fountains.
4. Parents who do not enter the building may not exit their cars and congregate in the parking lot.

PPE FOR COACHES AND STAFF

CLUB NAME will

1. provide coaches with appropriate PPE equipment and
2. provide coaches with up-to-date education and training on COVID-19 risk factors and protective behaviors (e.g., cough etiquette and care of PPE).

PPE will be

1. consistently and properly worn when required,
2. regularly inspected, maintained, and replaced, as necessary, and
3. properly removed, cleaned, and stored or disposed of, as applicable, to avoid contamination of self, others, or the environment.

PREPARING TO SWIM

1. Swimmers and coaches must wash their hands with a disinfectant soap and water (for 20 seconds or longer) or use a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available, upon entering the facility.
2. Swimmers may not share equipment.
3. Swimmers must bring a full water bottle labeled with his/her name. Water fountains will not be accessible to anyone.
4. Swimmers must use their personal equipment only.
5. Avoid touching gates, fences, benches, etc. if possible.
6. Swimmers must maintain 6' distance between each other.

DURING PRACTICE

1. Swimmers and coaches must follow directions for spacing and stay at least six feet apart. On-deck instruction and discussions are prohibited if appropriate distancing may not be maintained in doing so.
2. All parties on deck must not make physical contact with others, such as shaking hands or giving a high five.
3. Athletes must avoid sharing drinks or towels.
4. Athletes and coaches must maintain social distancing when taking a break.
5. Athletes/coaches who begin to cough/sneeze for any reason, must move away from others until coughing/sneezing dissipates.

PRACTICE STRUCTURE

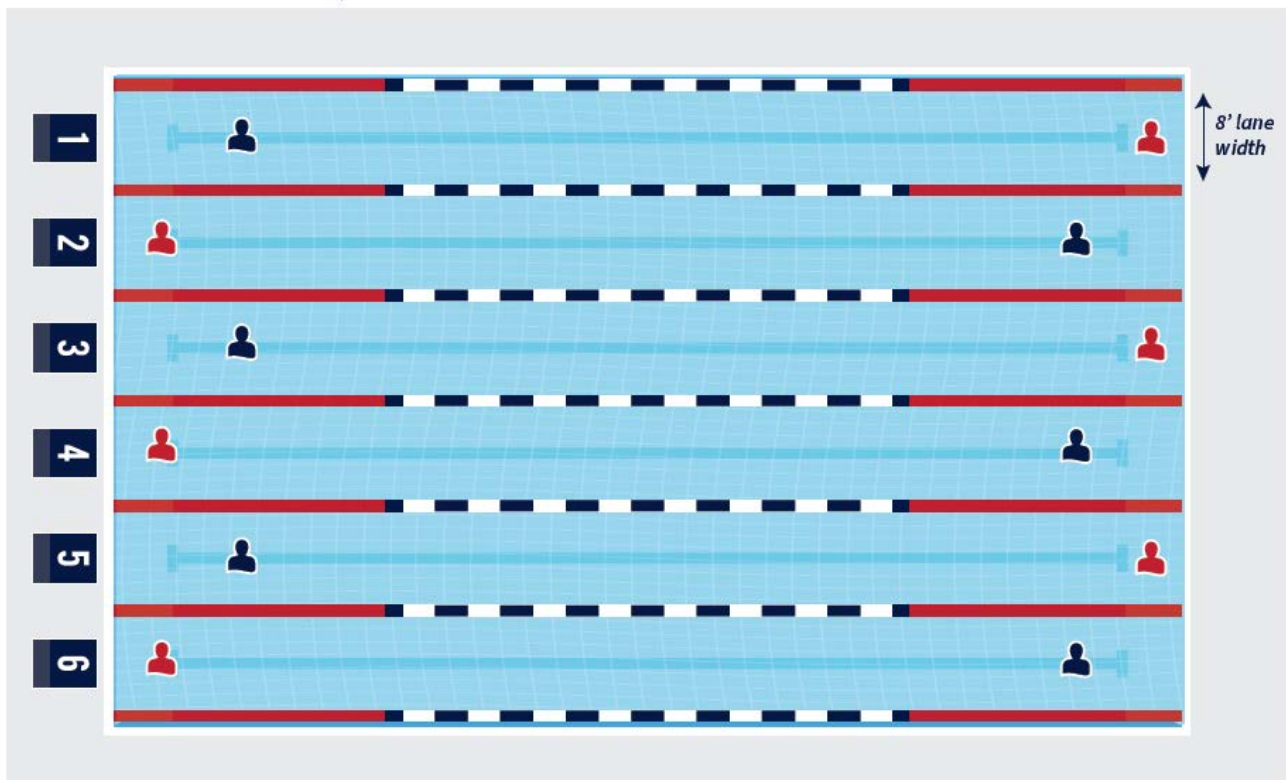
1. The number of practice sessions per week for each group is dependent on each club and its agreement with its facility.
2. Social distancing layouts - see attached.
Examples: staggered starts, opposite ends, number of swimmers per lane, communication with athletes, stations, markers visible to athletes for start and stop points, (e.g., visible spacing marks on pool deck, on lane lines, etc.), coaches on both ends of the pool if feasible.

DISINFECTING

The pool water is constantly being disinfected by chlorine, but extra disinfecting of items outside of the pool, such as door handles (inside and outside), handrails and pool ladders will be maintained.



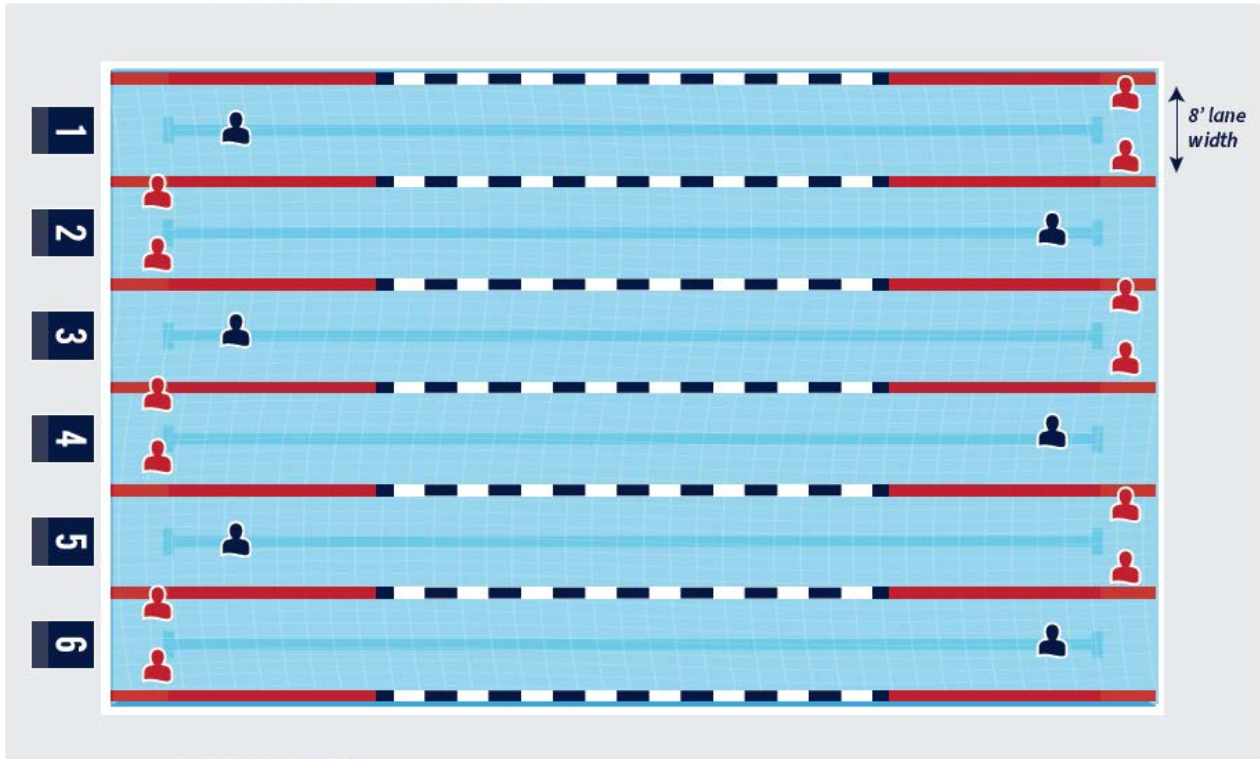
SOCIAL DISTANCING PRACTICE LAYOUT 25-YARD, 6-LANE POOL



12 SWIMMERS



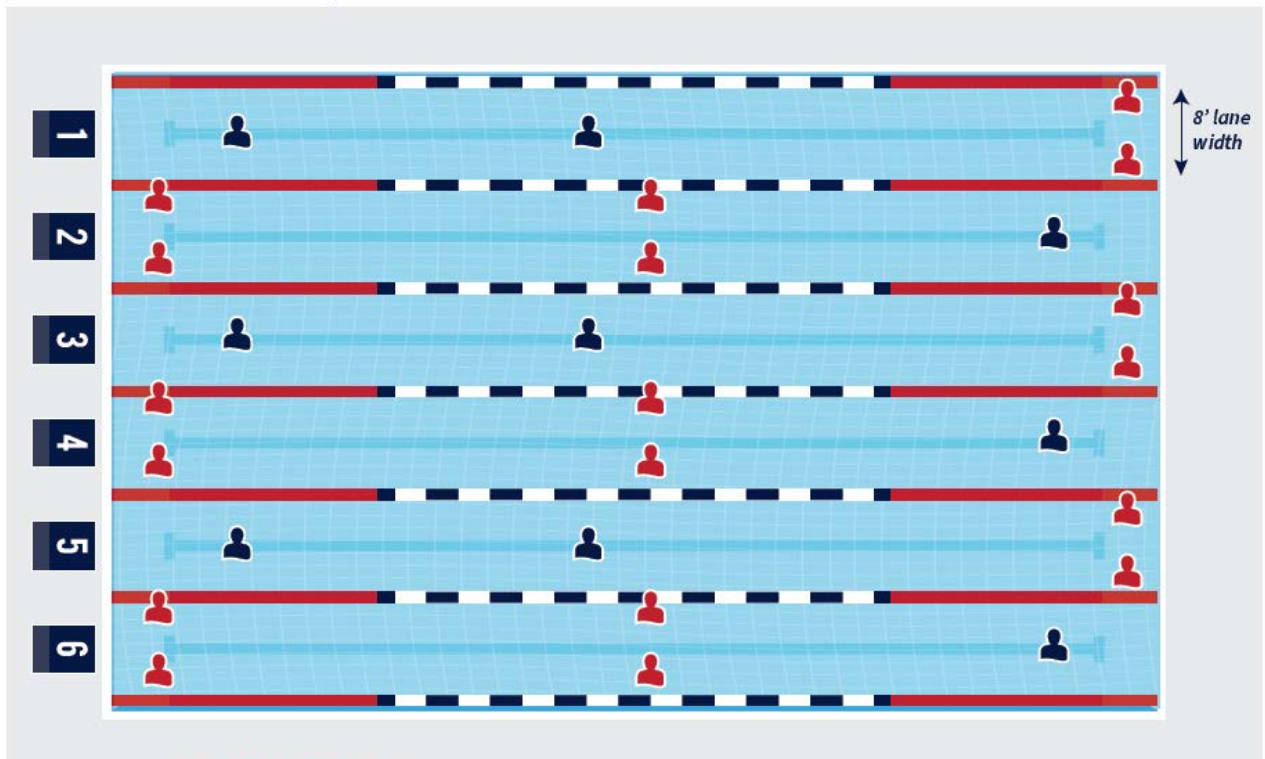
SOCIAL DISTANCING PRACTICE LAYOUT 25-YARD, 6-LANE POOL



18 SWIMMERS



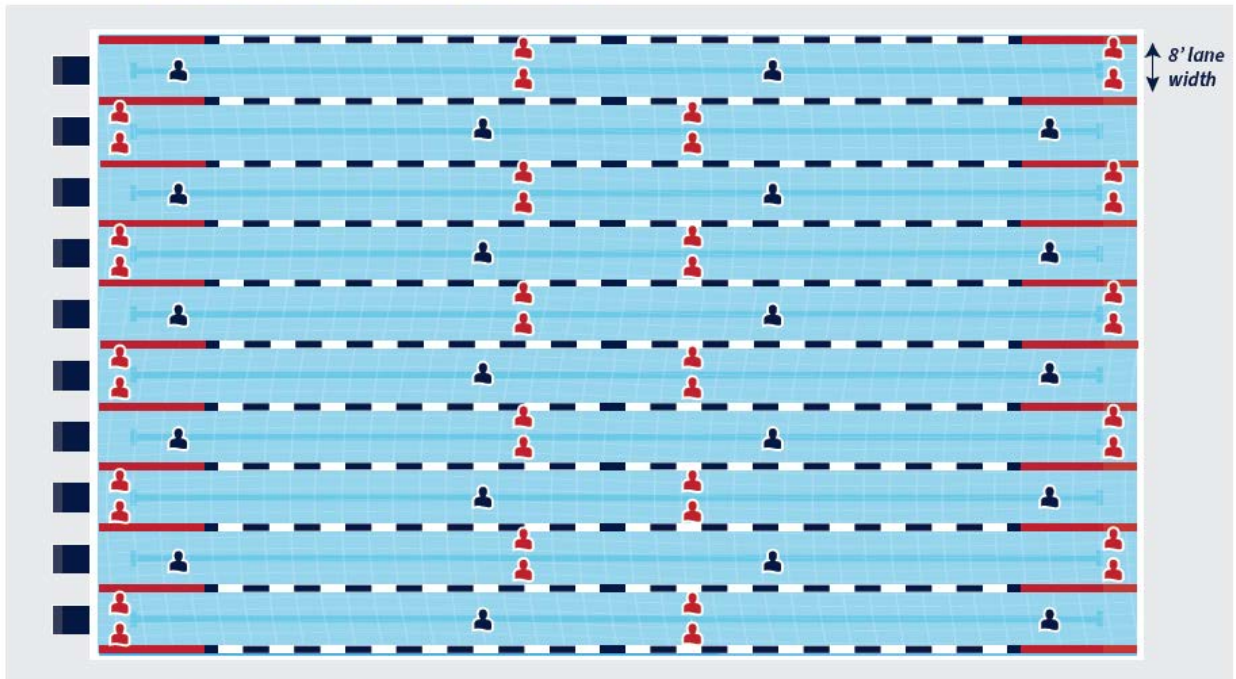
SOCIAL DISTANCING PRACTICE LAYOUT 25-YARD, 6-LANE POOL



27 SWIMMERS



SOCIAL DISTANCING PRACTICE LAYOUT 50-METER, 10-LANE POOL



60 SWIMMERS



SOCIAL DISTANCING PRACTICE LAYOUT

25-YARD, ON-DECK, SIT DOWN SLIDE SETS IN CIRCLES

Swimmers maintain 6 feet apart. Mark deck with 2-inch wide colored duct tape.

End of set climb out and go to assigned spot.

Use cones or other barriers to help with separation - deck needs to be wide enough to accommodate 6' of social distance.

Sit down/slide in to enter water.

The more "eyes" on deck the better.

