

**PACIFIC SWIMMING, INC.**

CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

Purpose

An LSC crisis may occur in several different situations including times when the integrity or reputation of Pacific Swimming is threatened by adverse or negative attention; when, in the eyes of the media, public, or its membership, Pacific Swimming did not react to a given situation in an appropriate or timely manner, or when an emergency arises that may threaten the operations of the permanent offices of Pacific Swimming. During these times, it is vital that Pacific Swimming effectively manages communication through a formal, clearly defined channel to mitigate the crisis or any serious negative repercussions while maintaining its reputation of leadership and transparency. This Pacific Swimming Crisis Management Plan manages the distribution of critical, often sensitive, information to the media, the public, and its members, while the Disaster Recovery Plan is designed to insure business continuity by protecting the LSC from threats to its physical assets and IT-disabling disasters.

The Role of the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors in Crisis Management and Disaster Recovery Planning

Under nonprofit governance laws, the members of the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors have the duty to exercise a high standard of care in managing the business of the organization. In an emergency, this duty extends to ensuring that the assets of the organization are protected and helping the organization manage its communications with key stakeholders, members, strategic partners, employees, news media, and the community. The board's responsibility prior to a crisis is twofold: 1) to be sure there is a crisis management/disaster recovery plan in place and 2) to know and understand its own role in helping the organization through a crisis.

Descriptions or Key Positions:

- 1) Spokesperson: General Chair or Designee - The person authorized to speak to the news media, public, membership, and stakeholders during a crisis.
- 2) Information Officer(s): Person(s) appointed by the General Chair and approved by the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors. The incident leader of the crisis communication plan who is charged with conducting the preliminary investigation of the crisis by gathering information from all relevant sources.
- 3) Crisis Communication Team: Members of the Crisis Communication Team shall be constantly accessible any time of the day or night.
 - a) Primary Team: Spokesperson, Information Officer, USA Swimming Representative, Legal Counsel, Office Staff.
 - b) Secondary Team: Remaining members of the Pacific Swimming Executive Committee and the Secretary.

- c) Situational: The General Chair and Information Officer may collaboratively identify other individuals to serve on the crisis communication team based on their expertise and/or relationship to the situation. This may include the Officials Chair, Governance Chair, Diversity Chair, etc.
- 4) Stakeholders: Stakeholders are those members of key constituent groups who have a vested interest in Pacific Swimming. They include:
 - a) USA Swimming
 - b) Pacific Swimming Board of Directors and Staff Members
 - c) Pacific Swimming Members - Clubs, Leagues, Coaches, Athletes, Non-Athletes
 - d) Parents/Guardians of Pacific Swimming member athletes
 - e) LSC Volunteers (committees, events, etc.)
 - f) Partner Organizations and Sponsors
 - g) Media and the Public

General Procedures

- 1) The General Chair, or their designee, is responsible for issues management. It is the responsibility of all Pacific Swimming board and staff members to constantly monitor the LSC and national swimming environments as well as the local, state, and national news coverage of issues or trends that might lead to public relations problems for Pacific Swimming. Upon becoming aware of the existence of any potentially harmful situation, board and staff members are required to contact the General Chair with as much information and documentation as possible regarding the potential situation. The General Chair or their designee, in consultation with selected board members and staff, shall immediately create and implement a plan that could include intervention or mediation to help mitigate any impending crisis.
- 2) Realizing that not all crises are preventable, it is the responsibility of the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors, through the office of the General Chair, to have an appropriate crisis preparation plan in place that includes the education of all board members with respect to that plan and their roles during a crisis.
- 3) The General Chair, or their designee, shall serve as the Spokesperson in the event of a crisis. If approached, board members should refer all inquiries to the designated Spokesperson.
- 4) The Board of Directors shall review the current LSC crisis management plan at the first Board of Directors meeting following the fall Pacific Swimming HOD meeting, to ensure that all board members are aware of the procedures and their roles during a crisis. The General Chair shall bring forth for board approval two recommended appointees to serve as a potential crisis Information Officer for the upcoming year. These appointees shall be current members of the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors, be readily available to lead the investigation of a crisis, be thorough and detail-oriented, and possess the ability to remain calm under pressure.
- 5) Should a crisis arise during the year that requires activation of the Pacific Swimming crisis management plan, the General Chair shall select one of the two approved appointees as the Information Officer for that situation. That selection shall be based primarily on the nature of the crisis with respect to both the board position of the selected appointee and their relationship to the crisis situation.

Best Practices

In the event of a crisis, the Board of Directors of Pacific Swimming shall adhere to the following best practices:

- 1) Crisis prevention is a priority for Pacific Swimming and is supported by continually maintaining sound business practices and effective internal and external communications.
- 2) The Board of Directors should budget and facilitate media training for the designated Spokesperson and staff members to learn strategies to effectively deal with the media during times of crisis.
- 3) Pacific Swimming board members and staff shall remain focused under pressure to allow for the best possible handling of the crisis. It is imperative to ensure that the business operations of Pacific Swimming continue to be carried out effectively and professionally during any time of crisis.
- 4) Pacific Swimming understands the urgency in getting its message out first. This allows Pacific Swimming to better control the content and its accuracy as well as stabilizing the situation and solidifying the reputation of Pacific Swimming. Crisis communication planning shall be designed to help manage the first 48 hours of an emergency.
- 5) After gathering facts to help understand the crisis, it is imperative that Pacific Swimming communicates the right message. Consultation with legal counsel may be necessary to ensure that appropriate information is shared at the appropriate time(s).
- 6) Board members should direct phone calls and emails to the designated Spokesperson. The Spokesperson is responsible for following up with all communications including phone calls and emails. Under no circumstances should a board member provide any information other than the contact information for the Spokesperson when approached.
- 7) As soon as possible upon receipt of any information pertaining to the crisis, board members should immediately relay information to the Information Officer.
- 8) Private conversations among board members are the preferred method of communication during a time of crisis. Members of the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors should minimize the use of email communications related to any existing crisis during the activation of the crisis management plan.
- 9) The Information Officer shall share information regarding the crisis with the board members and stakeholders of Pacific Swimming at the appropriate time.
- 10) Issues regarding personnel and Administrative Board of Review matters are to remain confidential.
- 11) The Pacific Swimming Office shall serve as the permanent repository for all critical Pacific Swimming documents, news releases, and/or fact sheets related to any crisis.

CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Process

- 1) Notification: The General Chair should be immediately notified of any impending or existing crisis by staff and/or board members of Pacific Swimming.
- 2) Assessment of the Situation: Upon receiving notification of an impending or existing crisis, the General Chair shall either activate an intervention/mediation plan or appoint one of the two approved Information Officers to initiate an investigation.
- 3) Appointment of the Information Officer: Based on the nature of the crisis, the General Chair shall appoint an Information Officer from the two individuals previously approved by the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors to initiate the investigation. This investigation should:
 - a) Assess what, when and where it happened.
 - b) Determine who is affected.
 - c) Identify why it happened and/or what or who caused it.
 - d) Investigate and assess the reaction to the incident.
 - e) Interview and collect all facts and documents.
 - f) Assess possible repercussions of the incident.
 - g) Ascertain when more information might become available.
 - h) Present recommendations to the General Chair as to how to prevent a recurrence.

Contact information for the Information Officer is listed in Appendix A and Board members should supply them with any pertinent information as soon as they are made aware.

- 4) Activation of Crisis Communication Team: Depending on the situation, the Information Officer shall convene the primary and/or primary and secondary crisis communication team(s) via conference call or in-person meeting.
 - a) The crisis communication team shall be alerted by a phone call; use of email is discouraged. It is imperative that the Information Officer has up-to-date contact information for all members of the crisis management team.
 - b) The information Officer may engage others in the process based on the situation.
- 5) Before Going Public – the Crisis Communication Team:
 - a) The Crisis Communication Team shall assess the situation to determine facts and begin planning based on information gathered and presented by the Information Officer.
 - b) The crisis communication team shall compose an appropriate response to the crises.
 - c) The crisis communication team shall construct a plan/process and timetable that appropriately addresses the crisis.

6) Communication with the Public - Crisis Communication Team:

- a) In consultation with the General Chair, the Information Officer alerts key stakeholders.
- b) The Spokesperson begins external communication.
- c) Update the website as needed.
- d) Continually evaluate message effectiveness as the situation progresses.
- e) Implement methods for updating both internal and external communication with added information as it becomes available.
- f) Distribute post-crisis communications to appropriate audiences.

7) Post Crisis Review

- a) Secure Loose Ends: Appropriate communications should be made to the appropriate audiences (including the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors and members) summarizing the resolution of the crisis. Complete all interaction with media contacts.
- b) File all notes, video/sound clips, talking points, communications, etc. into an electronic file to be housed permanently with Pacific Swimming. The hard copies of all official documents shall be filed and kept also at Pacific Swimming's office.
- c) Update and revise the crisis communication plan to reflect any suggested changes and present them to the Pacific Swimming Board of Directors for approval.
- d) Re-convene the crisis communication team to evaluate the effectiveness of the crisis management plan. If appropriate, engage the Board of Directors in this review.

DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

Purpose

It is imperative that Pacific Swimming has procedures in place to continue business in the event of a disaster that causes damage to and/or threatens the LSC's IT systems. It is the responsibility of each staff member, in collaboration with the General Chair and the Treasurer, to ensure that an effective plan is constructed and communicated. Components of the plan should include the following:

- 1) Maintain a complete inventory of all physical assets of Pacific Swimming. Update databases and spreadsheets annually and record major acquisitions as they occur.
- 2) Maintain a daily online backup of the office computers, key databases, and financial files.
- 3) Storage of copies of all bank account numbers, legal documents, board minutes, committee reports, insurance policies, etc. in a safe and secure place.
- 4) Construction of a document that contains emergency contact information for all staff and members of the Executive Committee and Secretary to be shared with members of both entities.
- 5) Establish a network of community organizations that could be called upon during specific types of crises.
- 6) Review and revise the disaster recovery plan at least once a year with office staff and the General Chair.

Appendix A – KEY POSITIONS – through August 31, 2025

Spokesperson

Lehla Irwin, General Chair

Email: lirwin@pacswim.org

Tel: 707)849-8319

Alternate Designate

Verónica Hernández, Administrative Vice-Chair

Email: vhernandez@pacswim.org

Tel: (408)893-3732

Information Officer(s)

Mary Ruddell, Treasurer

Email: mruddell@pacswim.org

Tel: (925) 768-8926

Cindy Rowland, Administrative Director

Email: cindy@pacswim.org

Tel: (925) 787-2707

CRISIS COMMUNICATION TEAM

Primary Team Spokesperson(s): Lehla Irwin, Verónica Hernández

Information Officers: Cindy Rowland, Mary Ruddell

Staff Support: Laurie Benton, Member Services Email: laurie@pacswim.org