



Denise Dombay, Owner & Pam Ambrose, Aquatics Director
SwimLabs Montgomery County
353 Muddy Branch Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

May 20, 2020

Mr. Marc Elrich
Montgomery County Executive
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Marc:

We are writing to you as a small business in Montgomery County, Maryland. We run a unique swim school facility in Gaithersburg that was closed on March 16, 2020 under the Governor's Executive Order. We have been carefully following the plans to reopen businesses in our State and County, and we are anxious to restart our business which offers lessons to both beginner and experienced swimmers. After reviewing the Governor's Roadmap to Recovery, we are concerned that we will be grouped with Fitness and Aquatic centers in the County's reopening plan. We are very different from other aquatic centers in the State and County and offer unique services that are unavailable in other facilities. Our lessons teach the important lifesaving skill of swimming. We outline below our approach to providing our unique swim services in a safe environment in compliance with the guidance outlined for "Personal Services" in the Roadmap.

SwimLabs Swim School is in a 6,000 square foot facility in the Festival at Muddy Branch shopping center. It is the only facility of its kind in the State of Maryland. We offer swim lessons to our customers by appointment only. Walk in swimmers are not allowed. Our space includes a large waiting area, as well as a separate space with a different ventilation system where we have four Endless swimming pools. We can provide our personal service while also meeting physical distancing and PPE requirements. We employ over 20 full and part time staff, who are all Montgomery County residents. All instructors are certified lifeguards.

Our Personal Service

We will offer ONLY private lessons to experienced swimmers upon reopening. All private lessons will be one student with one instructor, while maintaining at least 6' of physical distance. All instructors will wear a mask or face shield throughout the lesson. We will offer two types of private lessons.

- The first type of private lesson will be for competitive swimmers who work with a coach on improving stroke technique. We utilize underwater video cameras and televisions on deck to provide immediate feedback to each swimmer. As you know Maryland has

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produced several Olympic swimmers, including Katie Ledecky and Michael Phelps. Our unique training facility offers local swimmers an opportunity to continue their competitive training in a safe environment.

- The second type of private lesson will be for less experienced swimmers and students with special needs, who are able to swim the basic strokes, but are looking to refine and improve their technique. These swimmers will not require the instructor to be in the pool with them, retaining the safe physical distance of at least 6’.
- Once it’s appropriate we will offer private lessons to beginner swimmers with instructor wearing a face shield and mask but without the physical distance.

Our Unique Swimming Space

Within our facility, we have 4 Endless Pools in an enclosed area beyond the waiting area. Two of these pools are 10’x15’ and two are 15’x15’. Due to the space between pools (at least 6’) as well as the decking surrounding the pools, there is adequate space to distance the 4 instructors and 4 swimmers that may be in the pool area at one time. The pool area is approximately 2,000 sq. ft. At any given time, the pool area will have no more than 10 people in this enclosed space. While the swimmers will not be wearing face masks, they will remain at least 6 feet away from other people while they are in the swimming pool. Swimmers will also be submerged in chlorinated water plus a secondary disinfectant system that meets the swimming pool code standards. We will also implement the following additional controls within the pool space:

- A pool operator will be on site and will be performing cleaning of all surfaces, railings, and other items in the pool area every 30 minutes
- All pool equipment or teaching aids will be thoroughly cleaned before and after each use
- A pool operator will test the water hourly to ensure it meets the County’s standards. These standards will ensure that the pool water is adequately balanced to kill any virus/bacteria that may enter the pool
- Lesson times will be staggered by 15 minutes so that no more than 2 swimmers will be entering or leaving the pool area at one time. The pool operator will ensure that the swimmers maintain at least a 6’ distance from each other as they enter or depart the area.
- The entire pool area will be subject to a deep cleaning at the end of every day.
- We will encourage swimmers to enter the facility prepared for their lesson, and to leave the facility promptly at the end of their lesson. We will limit access to changing areas (opening only certain designated spaces) and showers. These areas will be disinfected every 30 minutes.

Waiting Area and Entry Controls

Our waiting area is approximately 1500 sq. ft. allowing adequate space for waiting parents and swimmers to remain physically distant by at least 6 feet. We will implement the following controls within the waiting area to ensure safety of our staff and guests:

- All persons entering the facility will be required to wear a face mask, except children under the age of 2.
- All persons entering the facility will be asked to utilize hand sanitizer.
- All swimmers and parents will also have their temperature taken upon arrival.
- All employees will have their temperatures checked upon arrival, and will be required to complete a questionnaire at the beginning of each shift confirming that they have not felt sick or had a fever and have not come in contact with anyone diagnosed with or suspected to have COVID-19.
- Anyone with a temperature over 100.4 will be denied entry.
- All swimmers will be instructed to attend lessons with only one adult, and accompanying adults will be strongly encouraged to wait in their car during the lesson.
- The waiting area/lobby will have floor markings designating assigned spots which will provide at least 6 feet of distance between people/families, as well as between customers and the front desk.
- Front desk staff will remain behind the desk, except when they are cleaning/disinfecting the facility.
- All surfaces will be cleaned/disinfected every 30 minutes by the front desk staff person.
- Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the facility for use by staff and customers.
- Retail sales will be discontinued.
- Coffee and water station will be closed.
- We will maintain one restroom and drinking fountain, and disinfect those areas every 30 minutes. In addition, we will provide disinfecting wipes for customer use in those spaces.
- We will post signage at the front door and throughout the facility alerting customers and staff to the CDC recommendations and social distancing protocols, as well as prevention efforts.
- We have removed all non-essential furniture/items from the waiting area.
- All employees will be trained in our COVID 19 safety measures and will be required to follow our safety and cleaning protocols.

We believe that our unique facility will allow us to provide this personal service in a safe and effective manner, consistent with other businesses that are considered a personal service. For a video tour of our facility, please visit [Google 360 Tour](#). In addition to the obvious safety and health benefits of knowing how to swim, our facility provides students with the opportunity to



develop strong physical and mental health. Please consider this request to include SwimLabs Montgomery County under the umbrella of “Personal Services” for purposes of reopening facilities in the State of Maryland and Montgomery County. Should you have any questions regarding this request, please feel free to call Denise Dombay, Owner, at 301 346 4541 or Pam Ambrose, Aquatics Director, at 301 509 0042. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Denise Dombay

Denise Dombay, Owner

Pam Ambrose

Pam Ambrose, Aquatics Director