
Officials' Newsletter - December 2024

USA Swimming Officials <Officials@mail.usaswimming.org>

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OFFICIALS' NEWSLETTER



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Greetings from the Chair

By: Dana Covington

Know your mission.

At the Annual Business Meeting in September, we reviewed the mission of the National Officials Committee (NOC) and we encouraged the LSC Officials Chairs to review or develop a mission statement for your LSC Officials Committee.

The National Officials Committee mission is:

To conduct programs to recruit, educate, train and certify a diverse team of USA Swimming officials to provide the highest quality and consistent officiating for athletes at all levels of swimming.

Each one of us has our own reason (or mission) for volunteering our time to the sport of swimming, why we began officiating, and why we continue to officiate.

A couple of years ago, my now adult daughter shared with me that when she was a swimmer, she was secretly proud that her parents were officials. Although that is not the reason I began officiating or the reason I continue to officiate, it does serve as a pretty good “thank you.” For those who don’t receive a thank you for all that you do for the sport, I will gladly say “thank you” for your commitment. You make a difference. I hope that you can continue to give your time, talent, and treasure to make meets happen. What a gift you give to teams and swimmers! May you be blessed with a joyous holiday season with family, friends, and the swim community.

Announcements

- Thank you to Anne Lawley for her tireless service to the National Officials Committee the past seven years. She has been an integral part of our committee work and the spearhead for these information-packed newsletters. You will be missed, Anne!
 - Please join me in welcoming Kevin Hogan to the NOC. Kevin is from Virginia Swimming and has been an active member of Anne Lawley’s communications working group on the NOC. Kevin was responsible for developing the LSC Officiating Standards FAQs and the Jr. Official FAQs. Please join me in congratulating Kevin!
 - National Meets
 - **National Championships** (APPLICATION IS CLOSED): June 3-7, 2025 in Indianapolis, IN. MR: Mickey Smythe.
 - **Open Water National & Junior Championships** (APPLICATION IS CLOSED): April 4-6 in Sarasota, FL. MR: Hector Acevedo
 - **Summer Meets** (Applications open six months before the meet and will close when enough have been received):
 - **Futures**: July 23-26, 2025. N2 certifications preferred
 - Greensboro, NC - MR: Jason Shibata
 - Justin, TX - MR: Barb Ship
 - Madison, WI - MR: Curtis Myers
 - Ocala, FL - MR: Betsy Russell
 - Sacramento, CA - MR: Rob Stevens
 - **Speedo Junior National Championships**: July 30-August 3, 2025 in Irvine, CA. MR: Anne Lawley. N3 certification Preferred
 - **TYR Summer Championships**: August 5-8, 2025 in Irvine, CA. MR: Ellen Colket. N3 certification preferred
 - The next Officials Chair Quarterly Call will be held Wednesday, January 8 at 6:00 p.m. MT. This is an open meeting.
 - The next NOC Quarterly call will be held Wednesday, February 5 at 5:00 p.m. MT. This is an open meeting.
 - The USA Swimming Offices will be closed Monday, December 23 through Wednesday, January 1.
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December Survey Question

By: Jason Johnson

The December Newsletter Survey is being replaced by the annual survey that is distributed to everyone that officiates at a winter Championship Meet. Look for the next newsletter survey in February.

October Survey Results

By: Jason Johnson

[Click here](#) to see the results of the October Officials' Newsletter Survey!

ST, AO, & SR Online Clinics/Tests

By: Dana Covington

We are more than a month into having the Starter and AO training in the USA Swimming University library. I hope you are seeing success with these clinic offerings.

USA Swimming has been receiving "help" requests regarding officials' tests not appearing in the officials' OTS record, which is causing delay in certification in some instances. This tells me that we have not clearly communicated to you, and for that I apologize.

Please take a moment to review the LSC Officiating Standards [HERE](#). The new online ST, Starter and AO clinics provided by USA Swimming in the University Library are the required clinic and test all rolled up into one (pretty handy dandy). So, if an official has successfully completed the online clinic, then they have met the requirements of attending a clinic and completing the test. REMINDER: Scroll all the way down after completing the online clinic and complete the survey. If you do not complete this step then your work will not be recorded!

The Referee online training is underway and is on target for release in the spring. Until that release, please continue to use your LSC Referee training clinic and the online Referee test to fulfill these components of the LSC Officiating Standards for Referee certification.

I hope this helps provide clarification, but as always, if questions remain, please feel free to reach out to your LSC Officials Chair.

Training Course Fees

By: Maggie Vail

Beginning in January 2025, non-members will be charged for the Officials' Certifications courses in the USA Swimming University. These courses, as well as most of the courses in the USA Swimming University, will remain free for members. Non-member pricing will help support and maintain the courses and platform. In order to continue taking advantage of the \$0 pricing, all prospective officials, officials in training, and new officials must register as a member or apprentice prior to taking the

online training.

OTS

By: Marianne Walling

Since we opened the national certification application on October 24, many excited officials have tried out the streamlined process. We are thrilled to see new officials' names appearing; however, please ensure you have attended an Officials Qualifying Meet (OQM), received an evaluation, and the sessions you've worked at the OQM are entered into the meet before clicking the submit button. If you are unsure what an OQM is, please contact your LSC Officials Chair for guidance. If you are still looking for the application, you can find it under the Officials tab in the blue banner.

Everyone who is nationally certified should now see their national certifications reflected in OTS. We are still working through some processes, so if something seems off, check back after a week and then reach out. If you notice that an expiration date and an effective date are the same in the system, that indicates an invalid certification, which will eventually be removed. Review turnaround time is back to two weeks during normal months, but it may take longer during peak application months, specifically March, April, July, August, and December. Did you know that from March 2023 to October 24, 2024, while OTS was being redeveloped, over 2,500 applications were processed?

New reporting features have been introduced for Officials' Chairs to assist with mentor identification and to support those advancing within the LSC. Meet Referees and LSC Officials Chairs now have access to a session report from within a meet, which includes names, IDs, emails, and sessions worked.

The 2024 Official Qualifying Meets (OQM) count is on target with nearly 200. Fifty-one LSCs submitted applications. These meets offer excellent opportunities for formal mentoring, both within and outside the LSC. If you have never attended one, give it a try, as there is always something to learn and new officials to meet.

Relay Judging Platform

By: Traci Johnson & Mickey Smythe

Technology has, without a doubt, enhanced the sport of swimming. From the spectators' experience to athletes' advanced training techniques, to the amount of information available to coaches, swimming has become a science. The technological advances have similarly transformed officiating through the availability of more accurate information. Underwater cameras have been the talk of the town, but there is another advancement that is crucial in officiating relays: the RJP - Relay Judging Platform.

Read more about the system and how to interpret its data through the link below.

[READ MORE](#)

Congratulations!

Congratulations and thanks to the following officials who represented USA Swimming in international competition:

World Aquatics Swimming Championships - Budapest, Hungary
December 10-15, 2025

Peter LaGow

Congratulations to these officials who served at their first national meet recently:

Note - We apologize for any omissions or errors.

Toyota U.S. Open - Greensboro

Matt James - Potomac Valley Swimming

Yoshimi Johnson - Maryland Swimming

Jessica Moore - Potomac Valley Swimming

Speedo Junior Championships East - Greensboro

John Avelis - Potomac Valley Swimming

Jennifer Bancroft - Lake Erie Swimming

Matt Banks - Virginia Swimming

Jae Davis - Missouri Valley Swimming

Johnathan Fauth - Virginia Swimming

Natalie Fennell - South Carolina Swimming

Amy Hartman - Allegheny Mountain Swimming

Eric Hawkins - North Carolina Swimming

Richard Hill - Virginia Swimming

Mike Krajewski - Florida Swimming

Chris Oliver - Potomac Valley Swimming

Tom Oliver - Potomac Valley Swimming

Bryan Saxton - Maryland Swimming

Corley Strunk - North Carolina Swimming

Dana Wone - Metropolitan Swimming

Speedo Junior Championships West - Austin

Eric Baroni - South Texas Swimming

Jerrold Brown - Colorado Swimming

Lee Cannon - Oregon Swimming

Rick Hurst - Gulf Swimming

Bonnie Ragland - Sierra Nevada Swimming



Officials' Excellence Award

Congratulations to the November winner of the Officials Excellence Award: Michael Carpenter from Central California.

Mike has been a volunteer in Central California for more than 10 years. He has worn many hats: dad, official, club booster, and LSC General Chair. At almost any meet in our LSC, you are sure to find Mike in some capacity working the deck. He fostered our LSC through the COVID-19 pandemic as General Chair and is currently working as our treasurer all while raising his youngest child and seeing him graduate high school this year. Mike has been a cornerstone in CCS working as the Meet Referee for our Age Group Championship meets for the last five years. He may be reducing his time with us at the LSC level as he watches his son Rob go off to his Alma Mater of UC Santa Barbara in the fall, but he has been one of our hardest working and most reliable officials in recent history.

Thank you Mike!

Looking for more details on the Officials' Excellence Award?

The Officials Excellence Award:

- National recognition for outstanding officials for LSC contribution
- Anyone can submit, although we will ask OC or GC for input
- The nominee must be an active member with current registration
- Six are awarded in a year, one each in odd-numbered months
- Nominations close around April
- Nominations are held for two cycles (24 months) unless selected
- NOC votes in May for the July through next May period (1 cycle)

Hopefully, your LSC OC committee is actively looking for ways to acknowledge officials and appreciate their service at the local level. This award is just a way to further acknowledge those deserving higher recognition. The link for the nomination form is [HERE](#).
