

NEW JERSEY SWIMMING OFFICIALS' CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

April 2024

In conjunction with the new USA Swimming standard requirements, this document outlines the certification process for new officials within the New Jersey LSC (Local Swimming Committee) as well as USA Swimming. We want to provide the best officials possible at all meets so that the swimmers will have the best opportunity to succeed in the pool. We also want to be sure that we provide a comprehensive training program so that our officials will be able to succeed at the tasks to which they are assigned.

In addition, we want a recognized process whereby officials can "move up" in position from stroke and turn judge, to chief judge, to starter and referee. It is important that our officials are prepared to deal with the situations that arise during a meet and enjoy the meet as much as the swimmers, parents and coaches.

The following sections set forth the specifications for each certification level. Each level has participation requirements, which involve working at meets sanctioned or approved by New Jersey Swimming or USA Swimming. Once the apprentice process has been completed, the Evaluation Form(s) should be sent to the NJ Swimming Official Certifiers (Christopher Barry - accebarry@verizon.net, Louis Hu - Louishu@yahoo.com, Gretchen Van de Walle - njhikers@gmail.com and Raymond Wong - officials@bbswim.org) for final approval or for an "action plan" to complete certification. In the event it is believed that an official has not shown the necessary competency in the position after completion of the required training and apprentice sessions, the LSC OC, or designee, shall provide the official with a written action plan of the steps needed to successfully obtain certification. Written notice shall be provided to the official within two (2) weeks of the last apprentice session (or submission of the appropriate documents to the Certifier), and a copy shall be provided to the LSC OC. An apprentice may always request additional training.

Prospective Stroke & Turn Judge

To become a stroke & turn judge, a candidate must:

- Successfully take and complete the USA Swimming online Foundations of Officiating and Stroke and Turn clinic (<https://university.usaswimming.org/landing>)
- Become a member of USA Swimming as an Official.
- Take the USA Swimming Athlete Protection Course (<https://www.usaswimming.org/resource-center/athlete-protection-training>)
- Take the NFHS or CDC Concussion Course (<https://www.usaswimming.org/officials/concussion-protocol-training>)
- Complete the USA Background Screening (<https://www.usaswimming.org/safe-sport/complete-a-background-check>)
- Be at least 18 years old

Upon successful completion of the above, the apprentice should print out the NJ Swimming Stroke and Turn Evaluation Form and will be required to participate in a total of four (4) USA-S meet sessions in at least 2 Swimming sanctioned or approved meets. ***These meet sessions must be completed within 12 months of clinic attendance.***

This participation will involve working with a certified stroke & turn judge or higher-level official. The apprentice may not make calls or disqualifications but will accompany the experienced official during the meet as a training session. Each apprentice session must be observed, and an evaluation form must be completed for each session by each observer. The referee should sign the apprentice evaluation form for each complete session at which the apprentice worked.

Upon completion of the apprentice sessions, the apprentice should send a photocopy of the evaluation form to the NJ Official Certifiers.

Prospective Administrative Official

To become an administrative official, a candidate must:

- Take the USA Swimming online Foundations of Officiating (<https://university.usaswimming.org/landing>) and a New Jersey Administrative Official clinic
- Pass USA Administrative Official Certification test with a score of 80% or better (<https://university.usaswimming.org/landing>).
- Become a member of USA Swimming as an Official.
- Take the USA Swimming Athlete Protection Course (<https://www.usaswimming.org/resource-center/athlete-protection-training>)
- Take the NFHS or CDC Concussion Course (<https://www.usaswimming.org/officials/concussion-protocol-training>)
- Complete the USA Background Screening (<https://www.usaswimming.org/safe-sport/complete-a-background-check>)
- Be at least 18 years old

Upon successful completion of the above, the apprentice should print out the NJ Swimming Administrative Official Evaluation Form and will be required to participate in a total of four (4) USA-S meet sessions in at least 2 Swimming sanctioned or approved meets. ***These meet sessions must be completed within 12 months of clinic attendance.***

This participation will involve working with a certified administrative official or Referee. The apprentice will assist with the operation of the “dry-side” of officiating learning the roles and tasks while accompanied by the experienced official during the meet as a training session. Each apprentice session must be observed, and an evaluation form must be completed for each session by each observer. The referee should sign the apprentice evaluation form for each complete session at which the apprentice worked.

Upon completion of the apprentice sessions, the apprentice should send a photocopy of the evaluation form to the NJ Official Certifiers.

Prospective Starter

To become a Starter, a candidate must:

- Attend a NJ Swimming Starter clinic
- Be certified as a Stroke and Turn official for a minimum of three months; worked at least four sessions at a minimum of two meets since Stroke and Turn certification.
- Pass USA Swimming Starter Certification test with a score of 80% or better (<https://university.usaswimming.org/landing>)
- Be at least 18 years old

Upon successful completion of the above, the apprentice should print out the NJ Swimming Starter Evaluation Form and will be required to participate in: a total of four (4) USA-S meet sessions in at least 2 Swimming sanctioned or approved meets with at least two trainers. ***These meet sessions must be completed within 12 months of clinic attendance.***

This participation will involve working with a certified Starter or Referee. Each apprentice session must be observed, and an evaluation form must be completed for each session by each observer. The referee should sign the apprentice evaluation form for each complete session at which the apprentice worked.

Upon completion of the apprentice sessions, the apprentice should send a photocopy of the evaluation form to the NJ Official Certifiers.

Prospective Referee

To become a Referee, a candidate must:

- Attend a NJ Swimming Referee clinic
- Be certified as a Stroke and Turn Official, Administrative Official and Starter
- Pass USA Swimming Referee Certification test with a score of 80% or better (<https://university.usaswimming.org/landing>)
- Be at least 19 years old

Upon successful completion of the above, the apprentice should print out the NJ Swimming Referee Evaluation Form and will be required to participate in: a total of four (4) USA-S meet sessions in at least 2 Swimming sanctioned or approved meets with at least two trainers. ***These meet sessions must be completed within 12 months of clinic attendance.***

This participation will involve working with a certified Referee. Each apprentice session must be observed, and an evaluation form must be completed for each session by each observer. The referee should sign the apprentice evaluation form for each complete session at which the apprentice worked.

Upon completion of the apprentice sessions, the apprentice should send a photocopy of the evaluation form to the NJ Official Certifiers.

Prospective Chief Judges

Certified Stroke & Turn officials may apply for the CJ's Training Clinic upon satisfying the following prerequisites:

- Must be certified as a stroke and turn official and worked a total of at least 16 sessions at sanctioned or approved meets at a stroke and turn judge.
- Attend a USA-S CJ training clinic (classroom and applicable on-deck training)
- Have read the USA Swimming CJ Professional documents.

Upon successful completion of the above, the apprentice should print out the NJ Swimming Chief Judge Evaluation Form and will be required to participate in and be evaluated by a Lead CJ or Referee in a total of four (4) USA-S meet sessions in at least 2 Swimming sanctioned or approved meets. As part of the above evaluations, be evaluated on successfully giving a stroke briefing for at least one of the sessions. ***These meet sessions must be completed within 12 months of clinic attendance.***

Each apprentice session must be observed, and an observation form must be completed for each session by the observer. The referee should sign the apprentice card for each complete session at which the apprentice worked.

Upon completion of the apprentice sessions, the apprentice should send a photocopy of the evaluation form to the NJ Official Certifiers. While officials are encouraged to further their training and education to better serve the athletes, it is not necessary to be a certified Chief Judge to serve in that capacity at any meet.

YMCA Certified Official becoming USA Swimming Certified Official

For a YMCA Certified Official seeking USA Swimming Official's Certification, they must complete the following steps:

1. Contact local USA Swimming Officials Chair and communicate desire to be certified in the LSC (Local Swim Committee) in your current certified position. (Stroke/Turn Judge, Starter, etc.)
2. Request a list of requirements necessary to validate your experience and abilities, proof of current certification and recommendations from other officials who are familiar with your abilities and experience.
3. Must serve on deck with a trainer in the capacity in which you are experienced for half of the number of sessions/meets necessary to satisfy USAS LSC certification requirements.
4. Register with USA Swimming as a non-athlete (Official). Registration is on an annual basis.

The LSC Officials' Chair shall satisfy themselves that the Official requesting USAS certification by credentials and experience is currently certified by the YMCA officials' program and meets the requirements for certification that would be met by any other USA Swimming Official transferring from any other LSC.

Definitions:

Certifier: An official designated by the LSC OC to certify training is complete and who shall record it in Officials Tracking System (OTS).

Clinic: Formal in person or online training clinic, recorded in OTS. Current LSC training curriculum will stay in place until USA Swimming Online Certification Training is available. When USA Swimming training curriculum is available, then that will be the required training.

Certification: The act of certifying. An official must meet certain requirements to be certified in a particular position.

Satisfactory Performance: Demonstrates the requisite knowledge of the applicable rules and satisfactorily performs the on-deck protocols and duties for the position. Deficiencies must be provided by LSC OC, or designee, in writing to the affected official with an Action Plan to success.

Session: Any portion of a meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, or type of competition, i.e., preliminaries and finals; morning and evening; Senior or Age Group, etc., which has been sanctioned or approved by USA Swimming and recorded in OTS.

Trainer: An official designated by the Referee at a meet, or the LSC OC, who has been certified in the position for at least one (1) year. If an official meeting the one (1) year requirement is not on deck, the Referee may select the most experienced certified official(s) to be a Trainer(s).

Training Sessions: Sessions that include strokes and/or relays. Time Trials & Freestyle Only Sessions shall not count toward Training Session requirements. Sessions shall be recorded in OTS.

USA Swimming Membership: Completed all USAS member associated requirements before being certified in any position.