



YMCA Swimming Black Book

**YMCA of the USA Swimming and Diving Advisory
Committee**

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INTRODUCTION

YMCA Swimming is a program supported by the YMCA of the USA and delivered by local YMCA units. As a YMCA program its goal is to strengthen the foundations of the community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. **The focus is, first and foremost, on the development of healthy, confident, values-centered individuals where training and competition are the vehicles by which this development occurs.** Everyone involved in the delivery of the program plays a critical role in this process. Coaches, YMCA leaders and volunteers assist individuals in their development by building positive relationships, acting with integrity and leading by example.

This booklet is a resource for all YMCA swimming programs. It outlines the rules, guidelines and best practices for the conduct of YMCA swimming programs of all sizes and competitive levels. It is updated yearly and made available on the YMCA Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org) by November 1 of each season. This booklet is *not* the meet handbook for the YMCA National Championships, although portions of this booklet are included in those handbooks. All YMCA swimming coaches, program administrators and other YMCA employees who supervise swimming programs are responsible for knowing the information in this document.

Rules and Guidelines

All YMCA competitive sports, including swimming, must comply with the *Rules that Govern YMCA Competitive Sports*. This document is published by the YMCA of the USA and applies to all competitive sports in the YMCA. The latest update became effective September 1, 2012. It is posted on the YMCA Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org) as well as the Y Exchange site (www.yexchange.org).

Additional rules apply to the YMCA National Championship meets and the recognition of YMCA National Records and YMCA Top 10 status. These rules are established by the National YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee, hereafter referred to as the National Advisory Committee. These rules may change from time to time. The National Championship Meet Handbooks, YMCA National Record Rules and YMCA Top 10 Rules are posted on the YMCA Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

The National Advisory Committee uses USA Swimming Technical Rules for the conduct of the National Championship Meets. These rules also apply to all closed competition meets serving as qualifying opportunities for the National Championship Meets, including dual meets and league, district, cluster, state, area or group championships.

****The rules established by the National Advisory Committee for the conduct of the National Championship program are strongly recommended for adoption and use at all levels of YMCA Swimming. This will prevent confusion as coaches, swimmers and volunteers advance through the levels of YMCA competition. This will also ensure that times achieved at all YMCA meets will be valid for consideration as YMCA National Championship qualifying times, YMCA Top 10 times and YMCA National Record times.***

In order for closed YMCA championship competitions to be recognized as National Championship Meet qualifying competitions, they must apply for and obtain a YMCA sanction and thus follow the same rules established for the conduct of the National Championship Meets. These guidelines may be updated from time to time by the National Advisory Committee.

Best Practices

The YMCA of the USA has issued the *Technical Assistance Paper for YMCA Swimming Programs*. This document establishes the best practices for the conduct of YMCA swimming programs, as set forth by the YMCA of the USA program, finance and legal services departments. YMCAs and YMCA swimming programs are strongly encouraged to follow these best practices. The Technical Assistance Paper is posted on the YMCA Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org) and the Y Exchange site (www.yexchange.org).

STRUCTURE OF YMCA SWIMMING

YMCA Swimming is structured to provide organization, resources and collaboration at all levels. The YMCA Swimming and Diving program is overseen by the YMCA of the USA's Sports and Recreation Specialist, guided by the National Advisory Committee and managed by local and regional YMCA swimming and diving bodies. The YMCA of the USA Director of National Events assists in the planning and coordination of the national championship meets.

YMCA of the USA Sports and Recreation Specialist

Dara Meinerth is the Sports and Recreation Specialist, overseeing the conduct of all YMCA competitive sports. This position is part of the YMCA of the USA staff. (dara.meinerth@ymca.net or 800-872-9622).

YMCA of the USA Director of National Events

Jim Weaton is the Director of National Events, a YMCA of the USA staff position that coordinates all national YMCA events. He works closely with the YMCA National Championship meet directors and meet committees. (jim.weaton@ymca.net or 800-872-9622)

The YMCA of the USA Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee (National Advisory Committee)

The committee is comprised of twelve members who serve three (3) year terms and who represent many facets of the program – coaches, officials, volunteers, executive directors and CEOs. The National Advisory Committee promotes the YMCA swimming program nationally and locally. It establishes the rules and procedures for the two YMCA National Championship Meets (short course and long course) as well as the Masters National Invitational and is responsible for the conduct of these competitions. The National Advisory Committee also maintains the YMCA National Records and yearly YMCA Top 10 lists. As an advisory body it consults with the YMCA of the USA on the delivery of the YMCA Swimming program at the local, regional and national levels, including the training of local YMCA program staff. The list of current members is on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

YMCA Group Representatives

These individuals serve as resources for local leagues, teams, coaches and YMCAs. Group representatives maintain communication and relationships with the National Advisory Committee, YMCA of the USA representatives, regional YMCA swimming bodies, local YMCA teams, USA Swimming representatives and USA Swimming Local Swimming Committees (LSCs). They issue YMCA credentials for coaches, and forward sanction requests for championship meets to the national sanctioning officer. Group representatives are responsible for overseeing the operation of YMCA Swimming in their region. The list of

current group representatives is on the YMCA Swimming website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

YMCA Group Officials' Coordinators

Within each Group, there is also a Group Officials' Coordinator whose role is to develop and maintain communication with YMCA certified swim officials in the Group. This includes passing on key information on rules changes, alerting officials to Swim Officials Training clinics in their area, recruiting officials for championship meets, encouraging officials to work at the national championship meets, etc. This person is the liaison between the National Advisory Committee and National Officials' Committee and the local swim officials.

YMCA Regional Swimming Committees

These committees operate regional, district, and/or state competitions, assist in arranging training and organize YMCA Swimming at the regional level. The members of these committees are chosen by league members or appointed by group representatives. YMCA regional committees may establish their own rules, provided that they are not in conflict with the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports. ***The National Advisory Committee strongly recommends that all levels of YMCA competitive swimming and diving also follow the rules set forth at the national level.***

Local YMCA Leagues

Leagues sponsor closed interassociation Y meets and championships, assist in arranging training and organize YMCA Swimming at local levels. YMCA leagues may establish their own rules, provided that they are congruent with the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports. ***The National Advisory Committee strongly recommends that all levels of YMCA competitive swimming and diving also follow the rules set forth at the national level.***

YMCA Teams

At the most local level, individual YMCAs and coaches manage the daily operation of the program. It is here that the program actively promotes youth development, healthy living and social responsibility and teaches the importance of the process and not just the outcome. The role of the swim team, its coaches and volunteers is to provide a structured, supportive environment and encourage important life skills such as goal setting, time management, self discipline, commitment, delayed gratification and perseverance.

All YMCA programs are conducted at the will of an individual YMCA branch or association. According to the Technical Assistance Paper, the YMCA of the USA strongly advises that YMCA coaches be employees or designated volunteers of the YMCA. Parents committees act in an advisory capacity, rather than a policy-making role and **all** money is directed through the YMCA and not through any account outside of the management and oversight of the YMCA.

ELIGIBILITY

The Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports must be followed at all levels of YMCA competition. Some, but not all, of those rules are referenced below. Coaches, athletes and YMCA supervisors are responsible for knowing and abiding by the complete Rules That Govern document.

Swimmer Eligibility

YMCA Membership

A Swimmer must be a YMCA member who, after due application, is enrolled by a YMCA association and is entitled to full privileges, activities, and services of that association. This means that a member of a YMCA swim team must have a full-privilege YMCA membership that entitles him or her to the same activities and services as other full-privilege YMCA members, not special limited-access memberships available only to swim team members. In Metropolitan YMCAs where association wide memberships entitle the individual to full privileges, activities and services of more than one unit, the person must compete for the unit in which he/she enrolls for the membership or designates at the time of enrollment. (Rules That Govern, Rule I)

A swimmer must be a member in good standing of his/her YMCA for **30 days** prior to the first day of a YMCA meet in which they compete. The swimmer must be a member in good standing of his/her YMCA for **90 days** prior to the first day of a district, regional, state or national championship meet in which they compete. (Rules That Govern, Rule III Sec.1a) The membership status must be valid through the end of the competition.

Dual Representation and Membership Transfer

A swimmer may only represent his/her YMCA in closed or open competition for at least 90 days prior to the first day of a YMCA championship meet. The only exception is for closed academic competition. A swimmer may represent his or her high school in closed academic competition and not be in violation of this rule. (Rules That Govern, Rule III, Sec. 3) When an academic institution, usually a prep or boarding school, offers a swimming program which also competes in open (USA Swimming) competition, a YMCA swimmer may not represent the school in open competition and still be in compliance of the permissible dual representation rule. He or she may compete in the open competition but must be unattached.

Some Metropolitan (multi-branch) YMCAs sponsor a single swimming program that serves all or multiple branches within the association. Others sponsor separate swimming programs at individual branches within the association. An association may not offer a program that competes as both. Swimmers may not represent a branch team in some competitions and an association-wide team in others during the current season. An example would be swimmers representing a branch team in dual meets and an association wide team in championships. This is considered Dual Representation and is not permissible.

Swimmers who wish to change their membership from one YMCA to another may do so through **Transfer by Consent**. An athlete may transfer from one YMCA team to another YMCA team and be eligible to compete for his/her new YMCA team immediately upon the written consent of the YMCA that he/she previously represented. This includes transfer from one metropolitan branch to another. The membership transfer shall be completed BEFORE the individual competes for the new association or branch. A Transfer by Consent Form may be found in the Rules That Govern and must be signed by the executive directors of both YMCAs involved. However, the athlete must still be a full privilege member of a YMCA - any YMCA - for 30 days prior to the first day of a YMCA meet in which they compete and be a full privilege member of a YMCA - any YMCA - for at least 90 days prior to the first day of a YMCA district, regional, state or national championship meet in which they compete. (Rules That Govern, Rule III, Sec. 2)

Swimmers who wish to **transfer from a non-YMCA team** (USA Swimming team) to a YMCA team during the current season must observe the YMCA membership rules as stated

above and in the Rules That Govern. To be eligible to compete in any YMCA championship meet, including a YMCA National Championship meet, a swimmer may not have represented any organization other than his/her YMCA team (with the exception of closed academic competition) for at least 90 days prior to the first day of the YMCA championship meet.

When a YMCA team is not also registered with USA Swimming, a member of that team may participate in USA Swimming competitions as an *Unattached* swimmer.

Amateur Status

According to the Rules That Govern, an athlete must maintain amateur status to participate in YMCA competition (Rules That Govern, Rule I). He or she may not have represented a post-high school institution in closed or open competition and shall not have accepted pay or compensation for competing in his or her sport.

Unattached Swimmers

There is no "unattached" designation in YMCA Swimming. All swimmers and divers must compete as a full member of a YMCA team and, thus, satisfy the YMCA membership requirements and be covered under that YMCA's insurance. See also the section titled, *YMCA without a Swim Team*.

YMCA Meet Participation

In order for an athlete to be eligible to compete in sanctioned YMCA championship competitions, he or she must have competed in a minimum number of closed interassociation YMCA meets during the current season. That number is determined by the league, region or other entity offering the championship meet. For YMCA National Championship meets, an athlete must have competed in three closed interassociation YMCA meets plus one sanctioned YMCA championship meet since September 1 of the current season.

Coach Eligibility

Safety Certifications

In the interest of maintaining the highest level of safety, the YMCA of the USA requires that all coaches who work with YMCA swimmers maintain current certification in the following areas.

- **CPR**
 - American Red Cross
 - American Heart Association
 - American Safety and Health Institute
 - National Safety Council
- **First Aid**
 - American Red Cross
 - American Heart Association
 - American Safety and Health Institute
 - National Safety Council
- **Safety Training for Swim Coaches**
 - If the full Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches course certification is used, no additional training or certification is required in this area.
 - If a coach has a Lifeguard or YMCA Aquatic Safety Assistant certification, the coach must **also** pass the online Red Cross Safety Training for Swim Coaches test (found at www.redcross.org/takeclasses,

www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org or www.usaswimming.org) and the expiration date is the earliest date on either the lifeguard certification or the Safety Training for Swim Coaches e-mail test verification. Acceptable courses include:

- American Red Cross Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED (2 year certification)
- YMCA Lifeguard (2 year certification)
- YMCA Aquatic Safety Assistant/YASA (2 year certification)
- International Lifeguard Training Program (Ellis & Associates) Pool Lifeguard Training (1 year license) or Special Facilities Training (1 year license)
- Starfish Aquatics Institute Starguard (1 year certification)

- **Principles of YMCA Swimming and Diving**

Coaches must hold current certifications in these areas in order to be permitted on deck at any YMCA sanctioned championship meet including the YMCA National Championship meets. An instructor's certification by itself does not satisfy the requirement for current certification. More information on the Lifeguard/Safety Training requirement is found at www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org.

Concussion Awareness

Some states mandate that all adults who work with a youth sports program complete a concussion awareness course or seminar. The YMCA of the USA encourages participation in concussion awareness training as well and has implemented two measures at the National Championship Meet in regard to concussions. All parents and athletes read and sign the Concussion Awareness Form during the meet entry procedure. In addition, there is a specific protocol in effect during the meet when any head injury occurs. More information may be found at www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org or www.yexchange.org.

Annual YMCA Team and Coach Registration

Each fall, the coach or team representative registers his/her team on the YMCA swimming registration site (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org). Registration for the team is free. **All** YMCA coaches also register on the same site each year. Coach registration is completed when the head coach or team representative submits the coaches registration fee (\$30 per team flat fee payable to YMCA of the USA), lists the safety certification expiration dates and either uploads or sends copies of the coaches' current safety certification cards (as listed above) to their group representative. Group representatives then issue YMCA coach credentials. The coach's credentials are to be displayed for deck access at sanctioned championship meets including YMCA Nationals.

USA Swimming recognizes Principles of YMCA Swimming and Diving on its coaches' credentials. USA Swimming member coaches may submit a copy of their Principles card to their LSC registrar with their other safety certifications. A "Y" will be placed on the USA-S card to indicate that the coach has completed the Principles course. YMCA coaches may submit this card to their group representative for verification and may show this card, or their YMCA coaches' card, at YMCA meets including Nationals.

Important: All YMCA coaches still need to complete the online YMCA registration. Coaches who do not complete the online registration will not be permitted on deck at any sanctioned YMCA championship meet.

In order to participate in sanctioned YMCA championship meets, a team and its coaches must have completed the online team and coach registration process. **The deadline for submission and verification of coach certifications for the short course season is February 1, 2014.** Certifications will not be verified by group representatives and YMCA coaches credentials will not be made between February 1, 2014 and the end of YMCA Short Course Nationals. **The deadline during the long course season is July 1, 2014.**

Eligibility of Associations and Teams

Definition of an Association

According to the Rules That Govern (Rule I), an Association is certified by the Board of Directors of the National Council of YMCAs, holds an Association branch or unit number and is eligible for separate listing in the YMCA Directory. For the purpose of competition only, an Association branch, department or center of a Metropolitan Association shall be considered an Association.

A Metropolitan Association must decide whether to operate one competitive swimming program that represents the association as a whole, or to have each of its branches operate its own team. A YMCA team must compete under one name and association number during the given season. A YMCA team may not represent a branch (having one association number) during part of the season and the association (which has a different association number than the branch) as a whole during another.

USA Swimming Team and YMCA Name

Each YMCA team may hold only one USA Swimming team membership. A YMCA team may not be part of more than one USA Swimming team membership (Cannot be comprised of swimmers of more than one USA Swimming team). YMCA teams **MUST** have their official YMCA name as listed in the national YMCA directory on their USA Swimming Certificate of Insurance.

A YMCA team does not have to register all of its swimmers with USA Swimming, but a YMCA team may not have two separate entities within one team (eg. a YMCA component and a USA Swimming component) where only those who compete in YMCA meets are YMCA members. All members of a team registered as a YMCA team must be members of that YMCA.

YMCA without a Swim Team

If an Association does not sponsor a swimming team, an eligible athlete from that Association may participate in the National Championship Meet representing his/her own YMCA, provided the entry is approved by the group representative in that region and by the National Advisory Committee. (Rules That Govern, Rule IV) The athlete should also be under the supervision of certified YMCA coach from another YMCA. The National Advisory Committee recommends that leagues, districts, states and regions afford such swimmers the same privileges.

COMPETITION

The YMCA of the USA views competition as a means by which the core values are taught and individual assets are developed. Healthy competition promotes a dedicated effort to reach one's potential with dignity, integrity and sportsmanship. YMCA competitions promote healthy competition and not a "winning at all costs" attitude.

Current Season

The YMCA Swimming season, as referenced in the Rules That Govern, Rule I, is September 1-August 31.

Age

For the purpose of recognizing YMCA National Championship qualifying times, National YMCA Records and YMCA Top 10 times, a swimmer's age is determined by his or her age on the first day of competition.

Technical Rules

The YMCA National Championship meets are conducted according to the current USA Swimming technical rules, as modified by the National Advisory Committee. The National Advisory Committee recommends that all YMCA teams, leagues, districts, states and regions follow the same rules for competitions.

Safety Regulations

The YMCA of the USA has established the following standards for the conduct of all YMCA competitions:

- A certified lifeguard is on duty at all times and has the sole responsibility of guarding the pool. Coaches who hold lifeguard certification are not to be considered on-duty lifeguards.
- Pool depth is at least five feet at any end of the pool where racing dives will be performed. If the pool water depth at the starting end of the pool is less than the prescribed five feet, all swimmers must start their races in the water.
- These standards are found in *On the Guard - YMCA Lifeguard Program manual*, *The Parent/Child and Preschool Aquatic Program Manual*, *The Youth and Adult Aquatic Program Manual*, *YMCA Swim Lessons Administrative Manual*, *Principles of YMCA Aquatics*, *YMCA of the USA Aquatic Guidelines*, *Technical Assistance Paper for YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving*. Failure to follow these standards may jeopardize the YMCA's insurance coverage.
- Changing into or out of swimsuits other than in locker rooms or other designated areas is not appropriate and is strongly discouraged (USA Swimming Rule 202.3.4F and 202.4.14D)

YMCA Interassociation Meets

YMCA interassociation meets are closed competitions (Rules That Govern, Rule I) in which:

- At least two (2) teams from different YMCA associations take part
- At least six (6) competitors from each team participate
- At least six (6) events are contested, including one four-person single-sex relay
- At least two (2) YMCA Certified officials are present for the conduct of the meet and the meet is conducted under YMCA rules. USA Swimming Certified Officials may assist with the officiating at such meets, provided that there are at least two YMCA Certified Officials, one of whom is the Referee.

The National Advisory Committee does not recognize postal, paper or mythical meets. The National Virtual Invitational Meet is the one exception to this rule in light of its nature and purpose.

A closed YMCA invitational meet lasting two or more days may be counted as two YMCA meets for the purpose of meeting the YMCA National Championship qualifying requirement of competing in three closed interassociation meets. In order to take advantage of this special allowance, a swimmer must compete in at least two separate days of the meet. **This is intended for teams that are located at a significant geographical distance from other YMCA teams.**

A single meet, regardless of length of days contested, may not be counted both as one of the closed inter-association meets and a sanctioned championship meet for the purpose of satisfying those qualification requirements for YMCA Nationals. Additionally, a single closed YMCA meet – a dual, tri, invitational, etc. – may not be counted as separate dual meets. For example, a tri meet may not be counted as two dual meets.

YMCA Championship Meets

YMCA championship meets must be conducted as formal competition in which:

- Teams or individuals are officially designated by a local YMCA to represent that YMCA
- Entry fees are charged
- Standings are kept
- Awards are given
- Records and championships are contested

(Rules That Govern, Rule I)

Sanctions

Sanctions are issued for YMCA League, State, District, Zone, Regional and National Championship meets and large championship-style invitationals only. Swimmers must compete in at least one sanctioned YMCA championship meet as an eligibility requirement for YMCA Nationals.

These rules for YMCA sanctioned championship meets must be followed:

- The meet is a closed YMCA meet.
- The meet and all participants adhere to the *Rules that Govern YMCA Competitive Sports*.
- USA Swimming Technical Rules are used.
- The meet is conducted by a minimum of four certified officials, at least two of whom are certified YMCA Swim Officials, one of whom is the Administrative Official and one of whom is a YMCA Level II Swim Official and this individual serves as the Meet Referee. (see note on page 12)
- Only coaches with current CPR, First Aid, Safety Training for Swim Coaches (or Lifeguard or YASA with successful completion of the Safety Training online test) and Principles of YMCA Swimming and Diving certifications are permitted on deck.
- All swimmers are full privilege members of their YMCA and have represented only their YMCA in competition (with the exception of closed academic competition) for a period of 90 days prior to the first day of the meet.
- The meet has entry standards.
- The meet is: the highest level championship meet for a given region, an end-of-season meet at a higher level for a given region, or a championship-style invitational that includes competitors from multiple regions and with a level of competition higher than that offered in their region.
- At least 75% of the individual events and 60% of the relays in the YMCA National Championship Meet events are offered
- All participating teams have completed the YMCA Team Registration for the current season.
- All coaches have completed the online YMCA coach registration for the current season.
- The executive director of each competing YMCA signs a statement verifying that all swimmers representing his/her YMCA meet the membership requirements and all coaches representing his/her YMCA meet the coach certification requirements.
- Meet results, along with a list of all participating coaches and officials, are sent to the group representative and the national YMCA database manager following the meet.

To obtain a sanction for a YMCA championship meet, a coach or meet director completes the sanction request form online and attaches a copy of the meet information. Copies of the referee's certifications are sent to the group representative. Payment of the \$50 sanctioning fee (payable to YMCA National Advisory Committee) is sent to the national sanctioning officer. After reviewing the request, the group representative forwards the sanction request to the national sanctioning officer who approves the sanction and verifies the sanction number.

The YMCA swimming and diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org) contains the current list of group representatives and their contact information. The list is also at the end of this document. *Meredith Griffin* is the current national sanctioning officer and her contact information is also on that list.

YMCA sanctioned meets should also be submitted for USA Swimming approval to the Local Swimming Committee. Teams and meet directors observe LSC rules, processes, deadlines and fees regarding the submission of meet approval applications. Be aware that USA Swimming requires an Administrative Official, in addition to the Meet Referee, for any meet it will sanction or approve. (Note that all YMCA Level II officials have received training in the various duties of an Administrative Official, most specifically resolution of timing differences, so any YMCA Level II official can serve in that category.) See USA Swimming Rule 202.4.

Results

Meet results export file of the sanctioned championship meet and the report of all participating coaches and officials are submitted to the group representative and the national database manager following the meet.

Results of USA-S approved YMCA championship and invitational meets are also submitted to the USA-S Local Swim Committee so that they can be loaded into the USA-S National "SWIMS" Database. Please see related information on the YMCA Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org).

YMCA COACHES ASSOCIATION

The YMCA Coaches Association is an organization representing all YMCA competitive swimming and diving coaches for the purpose of providing ideas and feedback to the National Advisory Committee. There are no dues. All coaches are automatically members. There is an Executive Committee consisting of ten (10) members elected to three (3) year terms on a rotating basis. Members of the Executive Committee are limited to two (2) consecutive terms. Elections are held each year at the Coaches Association meeting at the YMCA Short Course National Championship Meet. The Executive Committee advocates for, and provides resources to, YMCA coaches and swimmers. There is a Coaches Association page on the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website (www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org). Coaches Association by-laws, minutes from past meetings and a current roster may be found here.

YMCA SWIM OFFICIALS

A series of Swim Officials' Certification modules have been incorporated into the YMCA of the USA Program Training Certification System.

YMCAs are encouraged to have certified YMCA Swim Officials on the deck at all meets. For a meet to be recognized as a qualifying closed competition, it must be officiated by at least two YMCA Certified Officials, one of whom must be the Referee.

The YMCA Swim Officials' Certification Program involves two basic levels of certification. Level I Certified Officials are trained to take on the roles of a stroke & turn judge, place judge, relay take-off judge, timer or scorer. Level II Certified Officials are authorized to act as referees, starters and chief judges, in addition to any of the Level I positions. All new officials must begin as Level I officials. To be eligible to attend the Level II clinic, an official has to have served at least one year as a YMCA Certified Level I Official and have worked at least eight meet sessions as a certified official. All officials candidates for either level must be associated with a recognized YMCA competitive swimming and diving program. Approval of one of the following: the CEO, Executive Director, Aquatics Director or Head Coach of the YMCA sponsoring the candidate, is required for any person to take a clinic and become a YMCA Certified Swim Official.

YMCA Swim Officials certifications are valid for three years and individual proof of current certification must be available at all meets. Individuals re-certify by attending the appropriate YMCA Swim Official course. Re-certification also requires that the official has worked at least 12 sessions on deck as a certified official during the three-year certification period. Up to one half of the session requirement may be satisfied by working on deck as a certified official at USA Swimming meets.

To become a YMCA Swim Officials Trainer, a candidate must have been a YMCA Level II Swim Official for more than three years, have attended at least two Level II Certification clinics have worked at least 15 meet sessions during the last three-year time period – eight of which must be as a referee or starter, have worked at two state/district YMCA Championship meets encompassing at least six meet sessions and must complete the Trainer Candidate Application Form. All potential candidates for YMCA Swim Officials' Trainer must be approved by the National Officials' Committee Chair, or his/her designee, and the YMCA of the USA Sports and Recreation Specialist.

A Meet Verification Form is provided to all YMCA Swim Officials to use to verify that they have officiated at the requisite number of meets for re-certification or to become a Swim Officials' Trainer. The Meet Referee must sign these forms. Often an individual applying for Trainer Level Certification is a Meet Referee. This individual should sign the form or card as the Meet Referee and then obtain the signature or initials of the Executive Director, or his/her designee, on the form as well.

Having met the above prerequisites, trainer candidates must take Facilitation Skills, Orientation to the YMCA Training System (online), Adult Learning Concepts (online) and the Swim Officials' Trainer Level course that are offered at the National Championship Meets, YMCA Program Schools and/or regional training events. These courses are generally offered on weekends. Trainer Certifications are valid for two years. Individuals automatically renew their certifications by teaching one of the Swim Officials courses each year. (Trainer certifications are valid in perpetuity as long as a trainer conducts two clinics every three years, maintains his or her Level II certification and maintains the YMCA of the USA trainer standards.

YMCA TRAINING COURSES

A list of currently scheduled YMCA training courses is always available online at www.yexchange.org (if you do not already have an account, you will need to establish one). Select Aquatics, then the appropriate course.

Principles of YMCA Swimming and Diving

This course is required for all YMCA coaches in order to be on deck at YMCA Nationals and any YMCA sanctioned championship meet. It is strongly recommended for all YMCA coaches, aquatics directors and parent committee members. It covers YMCA swimming and diving structure, YMCA program emphasis, principles of operating a YMCA competitive swimming program. The course is online in an e-learning format and may be found on the Y Exchange site (www.yexchange.org) or through a link at www.ymcaswimminganddiving.org. The cost is \$20 and includes a component in which participants interview their aquatic director and executive director.

Prerequisites: 16 years old

YMCA Swim Officials Level I Course

This course certifies officials for the YMCA Swimming program in the areas of Stroke & Turn Judge, Relay Take-off Judge, Place Judge, Scorer and Timer. Participants learn the duties and responsibilities of these positions before, during and after a YMCA meet. They become familiar with the facility requirements, matters relating to eligibility and entry into a YMCA meet and the roles of the Chief Judge, Starter and Referee. Following the course, participants must complete a take-home test and earn a score of 80% or higher. The course takes approximately 4 hours of class time. Certification is good for three years but requires the official to work at least four meet sessions a year in an officiating capacity in order to maintain his/her certification.

Prerequisites: 21 years old

Associated with a local YMCA sponsored swim team

YMCA Swim Officials Level II Course

This course certifies officials for the YMCA Swimming program in the areas of Referee, Starter and Chief Judge. Participants learn the duties and responsibilities of these positions before, during and after a meet. They also review the facility and staffing requirements for a YMCA meet, specific stroke rules, eligibility and entry requirements for a YMCA meet and the roles of other officials. Following the course, participants must complete a take-home test and earn a score of 80% or higher. The course takes approximately 4 hours of class time. Certification is good for three years but requires the official to work at least four meet sessions a year in an officiating capacity in order to maintain his/her certification.

Prerequisites: 21 years old

Fully certified YMCA Level I Official for at least one year and have worked a minimum of at least eight sessions as a YMCA Certified Official (must substantiate). USA Swimming Certified Officials meeting the time and meet experience criteria for Level II may attend a Level II Clinic without first having served as a Level I YMCA Certified Official.

Associated with a local YMCA sponsored swim team

YMCA Swim Officials Trainer

Prepares an individual to teach YMCA Swim Officials at regional and local training offerings.

Prerequisites: 21 years old

Orientation to the YMCA Training System

YMCA Adult Learning Concepts

YMCA Facilitation Skills

YMCA Level II Certified Official for more than three years and attended at least two Level II Re-Certification clinics

Worked as a YMCA Certified Official at a minimum of fifteen meet sessions over the prior three years, with at least eight of those sessions being as a Referee or Starter

Worked as a YMCA Certified Official at his/her YMCA

State/District/Zone/Regional Championship Meet as a deck official for at least two years, encompassing at least six meet sessions

Recommended by his/her local YMCA

Approved by the YMCA of the USA Sports and Recreation Specialist and the National Officials' Committee Chair

ADDITIONAL RULES AND DEFINITIONS

Black Book

This document is the YMCA Swimming Black Book and contains the rules, guidelines and best practices for the conduct of YMCA swimming at all levels.

Blue Pages

The common name for the USA Swimming Technical Rules. These rules are found in the USA Swimming Handbook on pages that are blue in color. Please see *Technical Rules* in the *Competition* section on page 6 of this document.

Closed Competition

Competition in which athletes of only one kind of organization compete. A closed YMCA competition involves only YMCA athletes and teams.

Current Season

The current season is defined by each Sports National Event Committee (Rules That Govern, Rule I). The National YMCA Swimming and Diving Advisory Committee is the National Event Committee for YMCA swimming and diving. That body has determined that the season for YMCA swimming and diving is September 1 – August 31.

Dual Representation

An athlete represents more than one organization at a time. An example is a YMCA swimmer who also represents a different USA Swimming team (not their YMCA team) at the same time. This is not permitted, except as outlined in the *Eligibility* section on page 4.

Open Competition

The YMCA considers open competition to be competition in which athletes representing different kinds of organizations may compete. An example is USA Swimming meets because YMCA swimmers (who are registered with USA Swimming) and non-YMCA swimmers (who are registered with USA Swimming) may compete.

Organization

An organization is any body that sponsors swimming competition. Examples include YMCA, USA Swimming, High School Federation, Summer Leagues.

YMCA National Championship Meet Handbook

The handbook containing all rules, procedures and information for the YMCA National Championship meets. There is a separate meet handbook for the Short Course YMCA National Swimming and Diving Championships, the YMCA Long Course Swimming Championships and the YMCA Masters National Championships.

YMCA Swimming Group Representatives & Officials Coordinators

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