

Timing and Other Jobs at Swim Meets

To a great extent, swim meet success and efficiency depend on parents' involvement, especially when it comes to timing. All teams are required to provide parent timers at each swim meet in which their swimmers participate.

We would like to take this opportunity to clarify the timing and other job requirements for the Royal Swim Team parents at swim meets.

How timing chairs are assigned

The meet hosting team assigns each team a number of timing chairs based on the number of swimmers signed up for the meet. More specifically, the number of timing chairs is assigned for each session (morning and afternoon), based on the age of the swimmer(s) signed up for the meet. This explains, for example, why our team may have 5 timing chairs in the morning, when most of our 11-12-year-olds swim, and only 3 timing chairs in the afternoon on the same day. This also explains why it is important to sign up for timing for the session in which your swimmer participates.

What's a timing job?

Even if you are new to attending swim meets, timing is a very straightforward job. Each lane has 3 timing chairs. Sometimes all 3 chairs are assigned to the same team and sometimes they are shared with other teams.

Depending on the timing chair you get, you will have to do ONE of the following:

- Press the "pickle" at the end of each race when the swimmer finishes on your end of the pool.
- If you have the chair with a clipboard:
 1. Mark off the name of the swimmer on the list when he/she shows up to check in for the event.
 2. Press the "pickle" at the end of the race when the swimmer finishes on your end of the pool.
 3. Write down the time that the timer with the stopwatch gives to you at the end of the race.
- If you have the chair with a stopwatch:
 1. Make sure the stopwatch is cleared of the previous time and press START when the Admin gives the signal to the swimmers at the beginning of each race.
 2. Press the "pickle" at the end of the race AND press STOP on the stopwatch when the swimmer finishes on your end of the pool.
 3. Give the stopwatch time to the timer with the clipboard.

TIP: If you are completely new to it, feel free to ask a fellow timer to switch chairs till you get up to speed.

About jobs and service hours

Royal Swim Team attends swim meets at least once a month. Each meet is typically 2 days long. Each family is expected to complete at least 1 service hour per child/session. This means that a family with 1 swimmer participating on both days must time for at least 2 hours at that meet, while a family with 2 swimmers participating on both days may have to time for 4 hours at that meet.

Job assignments and service opportunities for each meet include the following:

| Job | Service hours |
|--|--|
| Timing (1 shift during your child's swim session) | 1 hour per session |
| Serving as a head timer for a session at least once a year | 2-4 hours (depends on session length) (NO timing required for that session) |
| Bringing the canopies to the meet (for families with a truck, van, or SUV) | 2-3 hours (NO timing required for one session) |
| Taking the canopies back to the Culver City pool after the meet (for families with a truck, van, or SUV) | 2-3 hours (NO timing required for one session) |

Signing up for jobs and tracking service hours

- All job assignments will be posted about a week before the meet for a signup on the first-come-first-served basis after you receive a notification email:
 - Sign up for the shift during the session in which your child participates.
 - If all families with 1 swimmer have signed up for timing and there are still open slots, families with 2 swimmers must be prepared to volunteer to time again, for example, in the afternoon after having timed in the morning or twice during the same session, if both swimmers participate in the same session.
 - Relays count as participation, so be prepared to time during the relays, if necessary.
 - Open events for older swimmers that require their own timers do not count as timing jobs, so be prepared to complete your timing shift during the main session in which your swimmer participates.
 - If your swimmer makes it to the finals at any of the Age Group, Jr. Olympics, Championship, or other meets with finals, be prepared to time again in the afternoon.
- Any empty spots will be filled by the timing administrators on Wednesday before the meet.
- Head timers for each session will be assigned on Wednesday before the meet.
- Any emergencies, reassignments, and questions thereafter should be referred to and will be handled by the assigned head timers.
- All assignments, re-assignments, and service hours will be tracked by the head timers and timing administrators.

NOTE: When you sign up for a job at the team web site, your hours are automatically tracked (and you can check your own hours). If you volunteer for a job during a meet, make sure to report your hours to the head timer. Otherwise, there will be no record of your hours. For more details, see below.

Job and other responsibilities

General

- Try to make new families feel welcome and help them get the hang of attending swim meets.
- Do not drop off your kids at the meet without having made arrangements for your timing shift.
- Help the family in charge of the canopies set them up and save a spot for the family if they need to park their car after dropping off the tents.
- Even if you are not timing or prefer to sit with friends and/or family away from the Royal canopies, please report to the head timer to make sure no additional help is needed for the team and provide you contact information.
- Lower the canopies for the overnight stay and pull off the canopies, if necessary.
- Help the family in charge of taking the canopies back fold and pack them for transportation.
- Pick up your own trash.

Canopy transportation

NOTE: We are still working out the details of how this has been handled so far and will keep you posted.

- Pick up typically 3 canopies from the storage location a day before the meet.
- Bring the canopies to the meet and set them up.
- Fold and bring the canopies back to the pool or the storage location.

Head Timers

Before the meet:

- Coordinate with the assigned timers and timing administrators any requests for changes or last-minute emergencies. If necessary, for contact information, please click the [Members](#) link in the top left corner of the team web site after you log in.
- Print the list of assignments for the assigned session.

At the meet:

- Stay at the Royal canopies throughout the entire session to which you are assigned. Not being present at the canopies will forfeit your service hours.
- Post the printout with the assignments in an easily accessible, prominent place at the Royal canopies for timers to check in during the meet. (A clipboard will be provided.)
- Make sure all timers are present and have checked in before the meet begins.
- Send a reminder if anybody is missing and find an alternate timer, if necessary.
- Make sure all timers are at the correct lanes and chairs.
- Make sure timers report on time to their chairs.
- If no alternate timer can be found, fill in the spot yourself.
- Submit the session printout with the timers' signatures and any volunteers names to a timing administrator along with a brief report at the end of the session.

Timers

Before the meet:

- Sign up for the desired shift as soon as possible. The shift **MUST** be during the session when your child is swimming.
- Provide a contact number and name for the head timer to be able to reach you.
- Be prepared to stay for the entire session for relays, additional timing, and so on, even if you swimmer completes his/her events early.
- Work with other parents to switch your shifts, find an alternate (any mature enough family member, friend, neighbor can do the job), or make any other appropriate arrangements. If necessary, for contact information, please click the [Members](#) link in the top left corner of the team web site after you log in.
TIP: Ask older swimmers if anybody needs community service hours for their school.
- Report to the head timer immediately, if you cannot complete your timing assignments because of the last-minute change of plans.

At the meet:

- Report to the head timer at the Royal canopies 15 minutes before your shift begins. Failure to do so may forfeit your service hour.
- Check in for the job by signing the posted timing assignment sheet.
- If you want to watch, record, or cheer your swimmer during your timing shift, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with the other team parents. Most of the time they are happy to help out.
- Report to your timing lane/chair a few minutes before your shift starts.
NOTE: If the meet schedule changes and starts, for example, at 2:15 pm instead of 2:00 pm, adjust your timing shift accordingly, for example, by timing from 2:15 to 3:15, and so on.
- Make sure to replace a timer from the Royal Swim Team, if the timing chairs are assigned to different teams.
- Do not leave your timing chair until the next Royal timer arrives.
- Report any issues to the head timer after you complete your shift.

Fines and penalties

- Any refusal to time during the meet when additional help is needed or failure to report to your timing chair without communicating to the head timer will be billed \$50 per hour in the upcoming invoice for the family.
- Repeat refusals and no-shows will be billed \$100 per hour.

Conclusion

Our goal is to see all of our parents work together as a team to support our swimmers. Our families rose to the occasion many times, doing multiple shifts in a day and bringing the canopies the night before the meet when their kids were not even participating in the meet. You may find that timing assignments provide a nice break during a long day, with some shade, a snack service, and the prime view of the competition pool. Let's help our coaches focus on helping our swimmers reach their goals and set a great example for our own kids by creating a friendly and peaceful environment.