

USAS R-9 Impacts for SN Swimming Officials

The Sierra Nevada Officials Committee has begun to review and align our processes to the new National Standard. Still, we wanted to highlight the proposed changes and their impact on current SN Officials and current and future apprentices in existing and future certifications, recertification's, training, and testing.

Current Officials:

1. There are no changes to current/already obtained certifications for existing Officials. As far as Officials are concerned, Stroke and Turn, Admin Official, Chief Judge and Starter positions will remain unchanged. An Official's certification will remain in place until the recertification process rolls around again in three years. At that point, we will need to recertify via testing and at least eight sessions in position over the last three years.
2. What is changing - The most significant change will be seen at the Referee level. All existing Referee certifications will be compressed into one certification: Referee. The result is that any certified Referee can work as a meet referee for any meet if a club requests.
3. The LSC Certification level of Admin Referee will be retired effective 12/31/2023
4. What is new – A new position, JR Stroke and Turn certification for 16 and 17-year-olds, will be effective in September of 2024.

New Officials and New Positions - Training and Apprenticeship – The biggest changes will be in the standardization of training and apprenticeships.

1. Clinic and Testing - All clinics will be self-paced courses with integrated tests offered via USA Swimming University (Education Tab on Dashboard). These clinics are still being developed and will be rolled out starting with Stroke and Turn on or around April 1, 2024, followed by AO and Starter in September and Referees in 2025. Until these online courses are available, the SN Officials Committee will continue to offer clinics for all positions in which courses are not available. After that point, SN Swimming will still offer optional clinics for interested parties as continuing education.
2. Apprenticeships – For all positions, within one year of completing the Clinic and Test phase, at least four (4) qualifying training sessions are required. These sessions must be over two (2) meets with two (2) different trainers or mentors. After the fourth session, if the apprentice shows proficiency in the position, a recommendation will be made for certification. The Official Tracking System (OTS) will be updated with the new certification if all prerequisites are met. If the apprentice is deficient in some area, an action plan will be developed based on the recommendations of trainers and provided to the apprentice with the goal of helping them complete their apprenticeship. If an apprentice does not feel ready at the end of the four sessions, they can always ask for additional training. A training session is a session that includes technical strokes and or relays. Freestyle-only sessions do not qualify as training sessions.
3. Prerequisites – Role-specific prerequisites vary by position, but they all require the following:
 - USA Swimming Non-Athlete Membership
 - Completion of Online clinic and test

- Deck Training with satisfactory performance within one year of clinic.
- Current Athlete Protection Training, Background Checks, Concussion Testing and CANRA (for CA residents only)

4. What's new:

- The clinic is now a nationwide standard course offered via USA Swimming University (online), specific to each certified position.
- Additional age and experience requirements are:
 - Jr S/T
 - 16 years old
 - S/T
 - 18 years old
 - If an apprentice has at least five years of experience as a USA swimmer past the age of 13 or as a coach, they are only required to perform at least two (2) on-deck sessions.
 - Admin Official
 - 18 years old
 - On-deck training increased to four (4) sessions
 - Starter
 - 18 years old
 - Certified Stroke and Turn for at least three months.
 - On-deck training reduced to four (4) sessions
 - Referee
 - 19 years of age
 - Certified Starter and Admin Official
 - On-deck training reduced to four (4) sessions
 - Chief Judge (CJ) –
 - 18 years old
 - Sixteen (16) sessions as a certified Stroke and Turn
 - On-deck training reduced to four (4) sessions

Terms or Definitions:

- Trainer: An Official certified in the position for at least a year designated by the Meet Referee to work with an apprentice on Deck. (i.e. Mentor)
- Certifier: Individual(s) appointed by the LSC Officials Chair to verify apprenticeship and review feedback provided by Trainers. Makes recommendations or provides feedback for the development of an action plan.
- Satisfactory Performance – Demonstrates knowledge of the applicable rules and performs the on-deck duties and responsibilities of the position.
- Training Session: A training session includes technical strokes or relays. Freestyle only sessions do not qualify as training sessions.