



Becoming a Stroke & Turn Judge

Summary of Steps to Certification (v. 02/21/2025)

Thank you for your interest in becoming a USA Swimming Stroke and Turn Judge. This document is meant to provide you with an outline of what you need to do to become certified. If you have not already done so, please review the [Virginia Swimming New Apprentice Official FAQ](#).

Prerequisites

- Minimum age of 18

Steps Needed to Complete Your Training

You must first register as a member of USA Swimming. Until you have done so, you will not be allowed to begin your on-deck training. The next two sections explain how to register.

Create an account on the USA Swimming website

- You may have already done this if you have registered your child as an athlete member of USA Swimming. If so, you don't need to do so again.
- Go to the USA Swimming website (usaswimming.org) homepage, click on the little torso icon in the upper righthand portion of the page, and then select the "Create Login" button on the Login page.
- Instructions for creating an account are on the righthand side, under "Help," on the login page described above.
- Note: Creating an account and registering as a member are two separate and independent steps; however, you must first create an account before you can register.

Register as either an apprentice official or as a non-athlete member (registration in either category is required to begin your on-deck training)

- If you are not already an official, you may register as an apprentice official. Non-athlete apprentice official registration facts:
 - Free. This can be a good choice if you'd like to test the waters, so to speak, before fully committing.
 - Registration in this category is valid for 60 days. To continue training after 60 days, or to become certified, you will need to upgrade to a non-athlete member of USA Swimming before your apprentice official period ends. There is an option in your member account to do this.
 - Allows tracking of various requirements such as completion of a background check, athlete protection training, concussion protocol training, and any required officials' tests.

- You may also initially register as a non-athlete member (official category) of USA Swimming and will have to do so prior to your apprentice official registration period expiring. Non-athlete member (official category) registration facts:
 - \$78 annual fee. Many clubs will reimburse this fee, but each club may have different requirements for doing so.
 - Registration after September 1 of the current year is good through December 31 of the following year.
 - Registration in this category is required prior to certification.
 - Allows tracking of various requirements such as completion of a background check, athlete protection training, concussion protocol training, and any required officials' tests.
- Registration process
 - Must be completed prior to starting your on-deck training and must be done to receive an apprentice training card.
 - If you are associated with a club, check with your club registrar to get a registration link. Your club registrar should also be able to provide you with any needed assistance to get you through the registration process.
 - If you are not associated with a club, reach out to businessoffice@virginiasswimming.org to request a registration link. The business office will be able to provide you with any needed assistance to get you through the registration process.

USA Swimming registration as a Non-Athlete member (official category) is not complete until you have completed a background check, athlete protection training, and concussion protocol training. These items are not required if you register as an Apprentice Official; however, these items will need to be completed when you convert your Apprentice Official Membership to a Non-Athlete Membership (official category). When registered as a Non-Athlete member (official category), these items must be completed in order for your membership to be in good standing and to be allowed on-deck.

Complete Athlete Protection Training (APT), Background Check (BGC), and concussion Protocol Training (CPT) (see Appendix for a more detailed explanation of the following steps)

- Logon to your USA Swimming account.
- Click on the "Education – Course Catalog" tab
- Select "Officials" and then "Membership Requirements" in the window that opens.
- Complete the following items.
 - Athlete Protection Training. The results will automatically associate with your membership, but may take up to 24 hours to update.
 - Background Check. The results will automatically associate with your membership, but may take up to 24 hours or more to update.
 - Concussion Protocol Training. Select either the NFHS Course or the CDC Course (your choice). Once finished, you will receive a completion certificate that must be submitted to businessoffice@virginiasswimming.org. Although USA Swimming will

accept either course, you might want to take the NFHS Course if you plan on officiating high school swimming.

Next, you need to take two online courses that are on the USA Swimming website. The first course, *Foundations of Officiating*, will introduce you to the philosophy of officiating and the expectations of officials at a swim meet. The second course, *Stroke and Turn Judge Certification*, will familiarize you with the technical rules for the strokes and relays that you will be observing on deck. The latter course also has an integrated assessment to test your knowledge. By viewing these courses prior to your on-deck training, you will be in the best position to make the most of on-deck training.

Complete the on-line USA Swimming *Foundations of Officiating* course and the online USA Swimming *Stroke and Turn Judge Clinic* and pass the accompanying test (see Appendix for a more detailed explanation of the following steps)

- Logon to your USA Swimming account.
- Click on the “Education – Course Catalog” tab
- Select “Officials” and then “Certification” in the window that opens.
- Complete the “*Foundations of Officiating*” course
- Complete the “*Stroke and Turn Judge Certification Course (Certification Course and Assessment)*” that includes an integrated test

Before starting your on-deck training, you need to obtain an apprentice training card to record the completion of each of the individual requirements for becoming a Stroke and Turn Judge as well as to track the progress of your on-deck apprentice sessions. You will need to bring this training card with you to your training sessions so that the progress of your training can be recorded.

Obtain a Stroke and Turn Judge apprentice training card

- [Follow this link](#) to request your Stroke and Turn Judge apprentice training card (please allow up to one week to receive this card via email).

The **final steps** in your training to become a certified Stroke and Turn Judge are to complete your on-deck training and then to submit your training card to your District Chair who will finalize the certification in OTS.

On-Deck Apprentice Sessions

- Complete 4 on-deck training sessions with a basic understanding of each required skill.
- An apprentice may voluntarily request additional training sessions if the apprentice feels that he/she needs additional training to master the required skills.
- If the validating Meet Referee does not believe the apprentice is ready to be certified and the apprentice does not voluntarily agree to additional training sessions, the Meet Referee must provide the VSI Officials Chair and corresponding District Chair with specific deficiencies that need to be remedied, and the VSI Officials Chair or District Chair will provide the apprentice with a written action plan of the steps needed to successfully obtain certification.

Following Completion of All Off- and On-Deck Training Requirements

- Make a copy of your completed training card and email it to your district officials chair (see email links below).
- If all certification requirements are met, and barring any rare and unusual circumstances, your District Chair will enter your certification into OTS.

Steps Needed to Recertify as a Stroke and Turn Judge

- Work a minimum of 8 sessions, within a 3-year period, at a minimum of 2 different meets as a Stroke and Turn Judge or a higher capacity.
- Attend clinic every 3 years.
- Pass USA Swimming recertification test every 3 years for the highest certification held.
- Satisfactory performance.

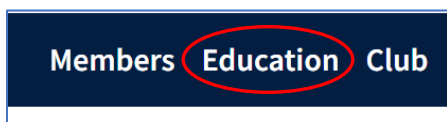
Contact Information

- [Click on this link](#) to find email contact information for the VSI District Officials Chairs and the VSI Club Officials Chairs.
- The VSI Officials Chair can be contacted at officialschair@virginiaswimming.org.

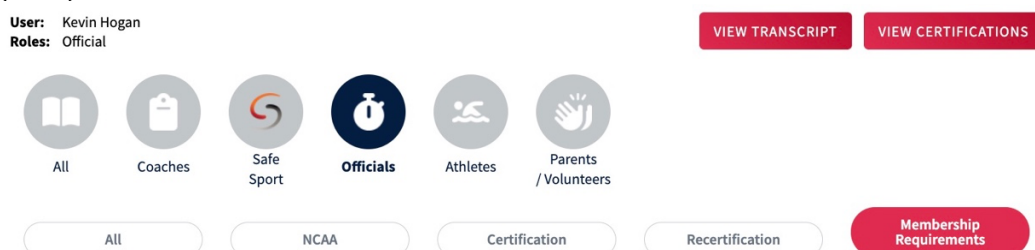
APPENDIX

Instructions for Completing Membership, Educational, and Testing Requirements for Non-Athlete Members (Officials)

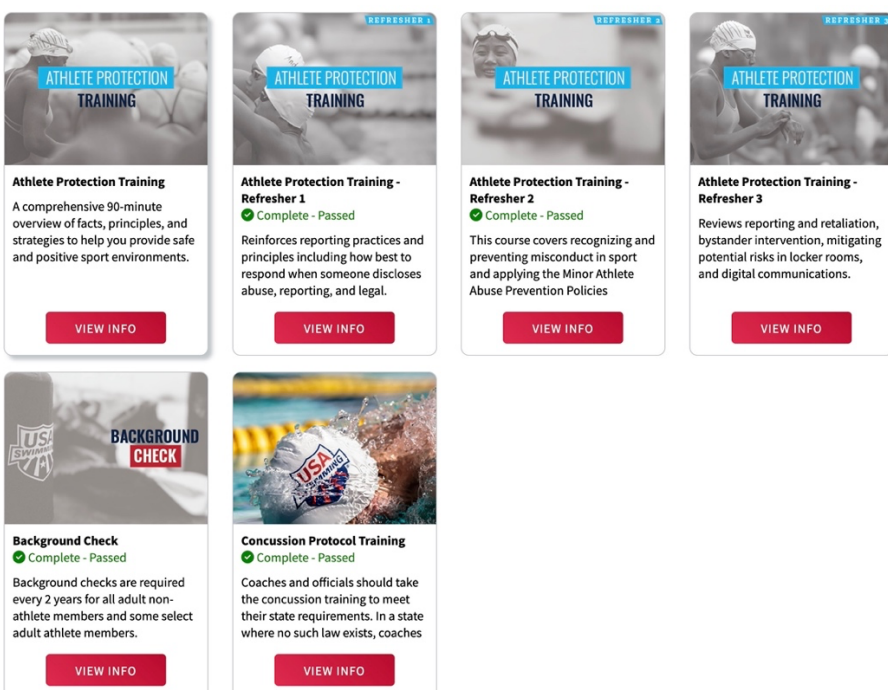
1. Log into your account on the USA Swimming website.
2. Click the Education tab and select Course Catalog



3. In the window that opens, select Officials → Membership Requirements to access Athlete Protection Training (APT), Background Check (BGC), and Concussion Protocol Training (CPT).



4. The required courses will be visible. (The order of the APT courses to be completed over a four-year cycle is Athlete Protection Training, Refresher 1, Refresher 2, Refresher 3. You will only be able to access the course that you need to complete.)



5. Once you complete any course, take a screen shot of the certificate or the final screen that includes the date of completion. This will be helpful if the course fails to update in your record.
6. The background check (once finalized) and APT will automatically update in your record but it may up to 24 hours. If it doesn't match after that, please contact businessoffice@virginiawimming.org for assistance. That will be the most efficient and effective way to get assistance.
7. The certificate for the Concussion Protocol Training will not automatically update in your record. Please send a copy of that certificate to businessoffice@virginiawimming.org so that it can be added.
8. Next, select Officials → Certification. The *Foundations of Officiating* and *Stroke and Turn Certification* courses can then be selected here.

