



Louisiana Swimming Officials Standards

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Introduction

Louisiana Swimming strives to develop officials who are fair, competent, current in rulebook application and consistent in approach. The training program is designed to produce skilled officials who can provide athletes with the best, most consistent, and fairest possible level of observation. This program is aimed at certification of N1 officials with emphasis on quality assurance and portability outside of the Louisiana Swimming LSC. National (N2 & N3) certification guidelines are posted on the USA Swimming Website and encompassed in another document.

The following guidelines are for informational purposes only. Certification of LSC officials is the responsibility of the Louisiana Swimming Officials Committee Chair. The Louisiana Swimming Officials Chair is Lomax Napper from Bulldog Aquatic Club. His contact email is lomax@marbury.com. These certification guidelines are effective until superseded by a new version. Changes to the certification guidelines require a majority vote from the Louisiana Swimming Executive Committee. Suggested changes to guidelines can be submitted in writing to the Officials Committee Chair at any time.

All recommendations to certify Louisiana officials will be accepted from any LSC approved meet referees only

*Certification at any position means that the official is fully trained, competent in position, and has met all the guidelines in this document.

*Meet sessions for officials in training shall be of a sufficient time and opportunity for official to observe a significant number of swimmers, should contain a complete schedule of events to provide the opportunity to observe all strokes, and provide opportunity to perform all duties of the position.

Goals

The goal of Louisiana swimming adopts these USA swimming standards for certification of officials is to set standards, that when applied, will accomplish the following:

- Ensure a clear and consistent knowledge of the rules
- Provide sufficient time in training to assure familiarity with all levels of competition
- Provide opportunity to work on the deck and advance through the certification process
- Allow automatic acceptance at the Stroke & Turn level between all LSCs meeting the USA Swimming Minimum Standards Guidelines
- Ensure professionalism in all aspects of the word “team” while in attendance at a swim event both on and off the deck

Position: Timer

Education and Training: None except per-meet timer briefings. Performance monitored by Chief Timer, Referee, and/or Starter. Timers are not officials but perform a necessary function for the swim meet. Some official positions will address the timers before the meet explaining their duties and assisting if problems.

Evaluation and Certification: Certify after passing USA Timer's Test and satisfactory performance at one meet.

Renewal: Based on satisfactory performance.

General Officials Information and Education

The primary dress code for Louisiana Swimming meets is a white shirt with navy shorts, pants, or skirts. White shoes are encouraged but not required. At the discretion of a meet referee this dress code can be modified but only for that meet.

There is to be an official meeting before every session at meets to give officiating assignments. The timing of the meeting is at the discretion of the meet referee.

For all official positions other than timers, officials must have:

1. The first thing to do is register your own personal account (not your child's account) with USA swimming
 - a. [Generate Deck Pass Account](#)
2. Pass a Level 2 Background Check
 - a. [Complete a Level 2 Background Check](#)
3. Complete the online Athlete Protection Training
 - a. [Complete Athlete Protection Training](#)
4. Complete the concussion protocol and forward your certificate to Judy Ramirez
 - a. [Complete Concussion Protocol Training](#)
5. View officials training videos demonstrate officiating and strokes. This is for officials education especially for new officials training seminars.
 - a. [How to Become an Official](#)
6. Have access to the 2022 USA Swimming Rule Book
 - a. [2022 USA Swimming Rule Book](#)
7. Take the position specific test offered by USA Swimming
 - a. [USA Swimming Position Testing Site](#)
8. Have Access to Louisiana Swimming Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy
 - a. [Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy Training](#)
9. Have access to USA Swimming Official Documents. Documents needed for meets.
 - a. [Officials Documents](#)

Louisiana Swimming Officials Code of Conduct

- Consider your body language when on duty. Always assume you are “on camera”
- Be alert, attentive, focused, calm, and professional.
- Avoid coaching, cheering, or fraternizing with coaches or swimmers
- Take discussions and emotional issues off-deck.
- Silence cell phones before the meet begins and do not look at or get on the phone while in a working position.
- **From USA Swimming:**
 - Policy is that a coach/official should not serve in both capacities during the same meet. It is a conflict of interest and not fair to anyone involved--swimmers, other coaches, teams, and it puts the official in a hard spot.

Position: Administrative Official/Administrative Referee

1. Education and Training:
 - a. Minimum Age 18
 - b. Formal clinic training.
 - c. Must take and pass the USA Administrative Official Test
 - d. Must work with at least (1) mentor (who has a minimum of one (1) year certification as Administrative Official, Administrative Referee, or Referee) for a minimum of two (2) sessions.
 - e. [The “Professional” Administrative Official](#)
2. Evaluation and Certification:
 - a. Certify after passing the Administrative Official test
 - b. Have a satisfactory performance at one (1) meet.
3. Renewal:
 - a. Recommend clinic and/or re-cert test.
 - b. To maintain certification, must work a minimum of four (4) sessions per year – at least one session must be as the administrative official, the remaining may be in any of the 6 positions for which the Administrative Official supervises/directs: Entry/Registration Personnel, Clerk of Course, Timing System Operator, Scoring Personnel, Timing Judge, or Meet Management Software Operator. May also work in a higher capacity (based on LSC determination as to designated certifications).
 - c. Based on continuing USA Swimming membership and satisfactory performance.
4. Note that Certified Referee attempting Administrative Official would be considered Administrative Referee Position instead of Administrative Official.

Position: Stroke and Turn

1. Education and Training:
 - a. Minimum Age 18
 - b. Formal clinic training.
 - c. Must take USA Swimming Stroke & Turn Judge test.
 - d. On-the-deck apprenticeship with at least two (2) mentors (who have a minimum of one (1) year certification as Stroke & Turn Judge) for a minimum of four (4) sessions. (Cannot make a disqualification during those sessions).
 - e. [The “Professional” Stroke and Turn Official](#)
2. Evaluation and Certification:
 - a. Evaluation by evaluator/mentor and/or Referee to be reported to LSC Officials Chair or their designee.
 - b. Must complete certification within one year from date of clinic.
 - c. Must be a member of USA Swimming, pass the Level 2 Background Check, and complete the online Athlete Protection Training before officiating as a Stroke and Turn Judge.
3. Renewal:
 - a. Recommend clinic, pre-meet briefing and/or test.
 - b. To maintain certification, must work a minimum of four (4) sessions per year in Stroke & Turn or higher capacity.
 - c. Based on continuing USA Swimming membership and satisfactory performance.

Position: Relay-Take Off Judge

1. Education and Training:
 - a. Minimum Age 18
 - b. Must be a certified Stroke and Turn Judge
2. Evaluation and Certification:
 - a. Considered part of Stroke and Turn Judge certification
3. Renewal:
 - a. Same as Stroke and Turn Judge

Stroke and Turn Procedure

1. Stroke and Turn Officials will be assigned their position for each session at the stroke briefing. I have outlined a stroke briefing below.
2. Once given your assignment, you will report at the time you are instructed to at the stroke briefing.
3. You will make stroke and turn disqualification calls in your jurisdiction. You do this by raising your hand.
 - a. If there is a chief judge, the chief judge will go to the S&T judge and ask about the call. They will report the disqualification to the deck ref who will accept, state more discussion needed, or not accept the call. If the call is accepted, then

the chief judge will write up the disqualification slip. You will sign the disqualification slip.

- b. If there is no chief judge, then you will write up your disqualification slips.
- c. There is an example of a disqualification slip below.

Position: Chief Judge

1. Education and Training:
 - a. Minimum Age 18
 - b. Must be a certified Stroke and Turn Judge
 - c. [The “Professional” Chief Judge](#)
2. Evaluation and Certification:
 - a. Considered part of Stroke and Turn certification.
 - b. Must have a minimum of one (1) year experience as a certified Stroke and Turn Judge
3. Renewal:
 - a. Same as Stroke and Turn Judge

Chief Judge Procedure

1. Under the “Professional” Chief Judge description above, it lists the many duties of a chief judge.
2. During the meet, the chief judge is assigned a spot on deck. They will have quadrant of officials to watch. If one of those officials has a potential disqualification, then the chief judge will discuss with the stroke and turn official. Then, they will present the findings to the deck ref. This exchange is scripted in the radio etiquette listed below.
3. The chief judge has many pre-meet and post meet responsibilities.

Position: Starter

1. Education and Training:
 - a. Minimum Age 21
 - b. Must attend clinic.
 - c. Must take USA Swimming Starters test and be a current member of USA Swimming, pass the Level 2 Background Check, and complete the online Athlete Protection Training.
 - d. Must serve a minimum of five (5) sessions on the deck at two (2) different meets with at least two (2) different mentors approved by the LSC Officials Chair or their designee.
 - e. Must have worked as certified Stroke & Turn Judge for a minimum of five (5) sessions total in at least two separate meets.
 - f. [The “Professional” Starter](#)
2. Evaluation and Certification:

- a. Certification based on recommendation of the mentor(s) and/or Referee(s)
- 3. Renewal:
 - a. Recommend clinic, pre-meet briefing and/or test.
 - b. To maintain certification, the official must work a minimum of four (4) sessions per year in Starter or higher capacity.
 - c. Based on continuing USA Swimming membership and evaluation.

Starting procedure

1. The deck referee will blow a series of short whistles.
2. The starter will then announce the event and heat 1 unless done by an announcer.
 - a. Example starter says “Event 1 Women’s 50 Yard Freestyle Heat 1”
3. Then the deck referee will blow a long whistle. The swimmers will then get on the block for Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Individual Medley Events. The deck referee will blow a second long whistle for Backstroke events so the swimmers can get ready.
4. The deck referee will then lift their hand to turn the event to you as the starter.
5. Then, you will tell the athletes to “Take your Mark.” After the swimmers provide the necessary hold, then give the starting signal –beep/strobe flash.
6. If the starter believes a false start has occurred, they should circle the lane on the potential false start on their heat sheet. They should approach the referee, and ask if they saw a swimmer initiating the start early. If this is dual confirmed indicated by the referee circling the same lane, then the false start is written up by the chief judge or the starter.
7. Then, you will start the next heat but say “Heat 2” after the short whistles.

False Start Scenarios

1. Here are some potential false start scenarios.
 - a. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/request-mentoring-and-evaluation/false-start-scenarios.pdf>

Invigilating and conducting timers meetings

1. Starters are supposed to conduct the timers meeting at meets. The timers meeting is usually held between 15 to 30 minutes before the session.
 - a. For the timers meeting. Introduce yourself and thank them for timing.
 - b. Tell them how to use the watches, backup buttons, and record the times on the clipboard.
 - c. Tell them
 - i. Be careful the deck is slippery.
 - ii. No cell phone use behind the blocks
 - iii. No videography/photography behind the blocks
 - iv. Please be in position 5 minutes prior to session beginning

- v. Be sure and thank them again. We could not do the meet without timers.
- 2. Invigilating happens at larger meets. At the meets, a starter and deck ref team will monitor warmup. During this, you would be given protocols by the head starter or meet ref. This could be accepting declared false starts/scratches, checking in with coaches, and monitoring athlete safety especially as the warmup transitions from open warmup to a controlled warmup session. Note that this is only if you are assigned at a meet to do this. It does not happen at every meet.

Position: Referee

1. Education and Training:
 - a. Minimum Age 21
 - b. Must attend referee's clinic and apprentice on-the-deck for a minimum of six (6) sessions at three (3) sanctioned meets with at least two (2) different referees.
 - c. Previous certification as a Stroke & Turn Judge or Starter for a minimum of one (1) year.
 - d. Recommend being familiar with the positions of Announcer, Clerk of Course, Starter, Stroke & Turn Judge, Chief Judge, Timer, Timing Judge and Meet Marshall.
Must pass USA Swimming Officials tests (Stroke & Turn/Timer, Timing Judge, Clerk of Course, Administrative, and Referee) with a grade of at least 80% within the past 24 months and be a current member of USA Swimming.
 - e. [The "Professional" Deck Referee](#)
2. Evaluation and Certification:
 - a. Certification based on recommendation of the mentor(s) and/or Referee(s)
3. Renewal:
 - a. Must attend clinic and/or take tests every three (3) years.
 - b. To maintain certification, must work a minimum of six (6) sessions per year in Starter or higher capacity with at least one session as Referee.
 - c. Based on continuing USA Swimming membership and evaluation by the LSC Officials Chair or their designee.

Deck Ref procedure

1. The deck referee will blow a series of short whistles.
2. The starter will then announce the event and heat 1 unless done by an announcer.
 - a. Example starter says "Event 1 Women's 50 Yard Freestyle Heat 1"
3. Then the deck referee will blow a long whistle. The swimmers will then get on the block for Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Individual Medley Events. The deck referee will blow a second long whistle for Backstroke events so the swimmers can get ready.
4. The deck referee will then lifting their hand to hand the event to the starter.
5. Once the athletes are the water, the deck ref watches the officials and races. The deck ref is responsible for the pool and the deck.

6. If there is a disqualification, a chief judge will report the disqualification to the deck ref. There is a script below with radio etiquette.
7. At the finish, the starter will record the order of finish unless another person is assigned to that duty.
8. Then, you will blow the short whistles to start the next heat.
9. The Deck Referee should be the first point of contact for any/all race issues related to a specific race and has the authority to arbitrate these issues. If a coach requests the option to speak to the Meet Referee, the request should be granted, however, this should not be advertised as an option to the coach as a way out. Requests for special consideration in regards to administrative/procedural issues should be directed to the Admin Referee or Meet Referee.

Radio Etiquette

1. Referees, Administrative Officials/Referees, and Chief Judges will use radios to facilitate communication at some meets.
 - a. [Radio Etiquette, and Usage Guidelines](#)

Officials Briefing

1. There is to be an official briefing or officials meeting before every session at meets to give officiating assignments. This information includes the stroke briefing which goes into each stroke. The timing of the meeting is at the discretion of the meet referee.
 - a. [Official's Briefing](#)
2. Disqualification Slip.
 - a. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/officiating-forms/admin-forms/disqualification-report.pdf>
3. Relay Take off Judge Slips
 - a. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/officiating-forms/relay-takeoff-forms/relay-takeoff-8-lanes.pdf>
 - b. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/officiating-forms/relay-takeoff-forms/relay-takeoff-lanes-0-9.pdf>
 - c. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/officiating-forms/relay-takeoff-forms/relay-takeoff-lanes-1-10.pdf>

Position: National Certification

1. USA Swimming offers a National Certification for its officials.
2. The National Officials Certification Program is administered by the USA Swimming Officials Committee. Its primary goal is to expand the education of officials through mentoring, participation and evaluation as well recognizing those officials who have demonstrated their knowledge of swim officiating at each level and position. Certification at any level requires a

combination of several things including evaluations, local participation at meets, continuing education, and the training and mentoring of other officials.

3. There are levels to national certification. You have N2 and N3.
 - a. For Stroke and Turn, you have N2 and N3
 - b. For Chief Judge, Starter, Deck Referee, and Admin, you have N2 then N3i then N3f.
 - i. N3i is not an official position, but you must do two evaluations at the N3 level for these positions (N3 initial and N3 final)
 - ii. For admin, you are an admin official at each level if you are not a deck at said level. For example, a N2 Deck Referee could become an N2 Admin Referee. If an official does not have Deck Referee for that level, then they would be an Admin Official for that level.
4. Louisiana Swimming has several officials currently with N2 and N3 certifications.
 - a. These officials are (S&T stands for Stroke and Turn; CJ-Chief Judge; AO-Admin Official; AR-Admin Ref; DR-Deck Ref)
 - i. Tyson Gabler N2 S&T
 - ii. Bridget Himel N2 S&T, N2 Starter, N2 DR
 - iii. Jody Musco-White N2 S&T
 - iv. Lomax Napper N2 S&T, N3i CJ, N3f Starter, N2 DR
 - v. Beth Resweber N2 S&T
 - vi. Don Webb N2 S&T
 - vii. Tony Zhang N2 S&T, N2 Starter
5. Certain meets have expectations for officials to be able to work.
 - a. The expectations are listed in here:
 - i. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/expectations-for-officiating-a-national-meet.pdf>
 - b. The National Meet and Educational Guidelines are listed here:
 - i. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/mentor-and-evaluator-resources/national-meet-and-educational-evaluations.pdf>
 - c. The Requirements by Position:
 - i. Stroke and Turn
 1. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/evaluation-and-certification-requirements/certification-requirements-by-position/professional-stroke-and-turn-official-n2-and-n3.pdf>
 - ii. Chief Judge
 1. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/evaluation-and-certification-requirements/certification-requirements-by-position/professional-chief-judge-n2-and-n3-july-22.pdf>
 - iii. Starter
 1. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialsdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/evaluation-and-certification-requirements/certification-requirements-by-position/professional-stroke-and-turn-official-n2-and-n3.pdf>

[rements/certification-requirements-by-position/professional-starter-n2-and-n3-july-22.pdf](https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/evaluation-and-certification-requirements/certification-requirements-by-position/professional-starter-n2-and-n3-july-22.pdf)

iv. Deck Referee

1. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/evaluation-and-certification-requirements/certification-requirements-by-position/professional-deck-referee-n2-and-n3-july-22.pdf>

v. Admin Official

1. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/evaluation-and-certification-requirements/certification-requirements-by-position/professional-administrative-official-n2.pdf>

vi. Admin Referee

1. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/evaluation-and-certification-requirements/certification-requirements-by-position/professional-administrative-referee-n2-and-n3-july-22.pdf>

d. Evaluation Templates

i. Your evaluator will give you an evaluation template

1. These are located at:
 - a. <https://www.usaswimming.org/officials/national-certification-evaluation>

6. There is a list of meets that are approved for these evaluations. USA Swimming will keep a list of meets.

- a. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/evaluation-and-certification-requirements/meets-approved-for-officials-qualification-01-05-23.pdf>

7. The meets are called OQM (Officials Qualifying Meet) meets. I hope we can begin to have a few in Louisiana. Here is the application to host an OQM and considerations prior to applying for an OQM.

- a. https://fs22.formsite.com/usaswimming/OQM_Application/index.html
- b. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/oqm/official-qualifying-meet-considerations-prior-to-application.pdf>

8. To become an evaluator here are some guidelines:

- a. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/mentor-and-evaluator-resources/evaluator-appointment-guidelines.pdf>
- b. <https://www.usaswimming.org/docs/default-source/officialdocuments/national-certification-and-evaluation/mentor-and-evaluator-resources/guide-to-oqms-evaluations-and-certifications.pdf>

