

NORTH CAROLINA SWIMMING OFFICIAL'S CERTIFICATION GUIDELINES

September 2002

RATIONALE AND MISSION STATEMENT

The sport of swimming relies heavily upon volunteers to work in the capacity of officials in order to conduct fair and equitable competition for our athletes. In order to achieve this stated goal, minimum standards have been promulgated by USA Swimming Officials Committee, and adopted by Resolution of the USA Swimming Board of Directors.

NC Swimming certifies officials in the positions of Stroke and Turn, Starter and Referee. The requirements for certification at these positions exceed the minimum requirements of USA Swimming. The rationale for the NC requirements is based on many years of experience in the sport and the belief that deck officials should be trained better than a 'minimum' level of proficiency. Athletes deserve the best level of training and experience our officials can provide.

Our training programs are designed to provide the optimum combination of didactic education and practical, poolside experience ("On the Job Training" if you will) that will accomplish the following:

- Assure 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
- Maintain knowledge of the current rules and deck side experience

The 'sessions' referred to in our requirements should be of a duration to assure sufficient time to observe a significant number of swimmers and should contain a complete schedule of events to provide the opportunity to observe all strokes.

One or more Certified Referees are expected to supervise all sessions in which an apprentice official participates. An apprentice may be supervised one-on-one by a Referee, or the Referee may delegate the supervision to another competent, well experienced official. If the Referee believes that a meet session did not provide an adequate experience, he/she **should not** 'sign off' on that session. In the case of a session worked by a Starter or Referee apprentice, the Referee in charge **should not** 'sign off' on the session if the apprentice did not gain meaningful experience. If the final 'session' of apprenticeship for a Starter or Referee apprentice reveals the apprentice has **not** had sufficient experience to certify for this position, then the Referee **should not** 'sign off'.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The following guidelines for all positions must be followed:

- In general, all ‘apprentice sessions’ must be performed at NC Swimming/USA Swimming sanctioned meets. Referee apprentice sessions must be performed at meets which are ‘open competition’ and fee sanctioned on the published NC Swimming schedule of ‘open/invitational meets’. Closed competition (‘League meets’ and Dual, Tri or Quad meets are considered ‘Closed competition’) are allowed for Stroke/Turn and Starter apprenticeship, but not Referee. **US Masters, NC High School, YMCA, YWCA and NCAA meets are not approved for ‘apprentice session’ credit.**
- Stroke/Turn and Starter apprentice sessions may be performed at a meet sanctioned by another US Swimming member LSC outside of NC Swimming. However, all Referee apprentice sessions must be performed within NC.
- Prior to starting any **‘On deck’ apprentice session**, an apprentice must first take the appropriate clinic, then complete the USA Swimming written test for the position, and register with US Swimming through the NC registration chair. In the case of the Starter and Referee apprenticeship, one must submit proof of time served and proficiency in the preceding position before taking the clinic or test.
- Stroke/Turn apprentices must be members of USA Swimming and display their membership card while on deck as do all certified officials.
- Tests which are downloaded directly from the USA Swimming website and submitted to USA Swimming in Colorado Springs, or the NC Swimming Officials Chair without first participating in the appropriate clinic will be returned ungraded to the submitter.

CERTIFICATION RENEWAL

Renewal and maintenance of one’s certification is based on participation in an annual rules clinic, and working a minimum number of meets over the certification period. NC Swimming follows a scheme of **biennial certification**. The certification ends on years with an even-number (e.g. 2002, 2004, 2006....). Certification renewal requirements are listed in “NC Swimming Officials Certification Requirements “. It is important to remember that the USA Swimming ‘National’ certification levels of ‘National Official’ and ‘National Championship Official’ **do not replace, or supercede** the NC Swimming certification. This means if one’s NC certification expires in 2002, and he/she’s National Official certification expires in 2003, the National Official certification will lapse if the NC certification is not renewed. It is most important to note that registration with USA Swimming on an **annual basis is an absolute must. It is a requirement of NC Swimming that officials and coaches must display their USA Swimming registration at all times while on deck.**