

The following seven LSC members attended the USA swimming workshop in April 2023.

Mary Evelyn Bowling – General Chair track

Deanna Oliphant – General Chair track

Marcy Parshall – coaches track

Lorna Anaya – Safe Sport track

Thom Fairleigh – meet ref track

Jessica Evans – Officials Chair track

Mindy Donofrio

Reports are included from Deanna, Marcy, Thom, Jessica and Mindy.

**USA Swimming Workshop Report 2023**  
**Submitted by Deanna Oliphant, Admin Vice Chair**



LSC Open Water Programming:

A presentation about how to bring OW to your LSC. They discussed various resources available through USAS and other LSCs that currently offer OW and how they could mentor an LSC to start OW programming.

Activating the LSC Governance Committee:

Breakout into smaller groups to discuss deficits in various LSCs and ways to correct them. I chose to go to the Planning session. We talked about the importance of a Governance Planning Calendar. Breaking governing documents into various years to review and report any necessary changes, clean up, or updates to best practices.

Meet 360:

Went over what is Meet 360 and reporting avenues for Safe Sport.

Effective LSC Communication:

Discussed analytics and marketing tool kits that are available.

I would strongly encourage that athlete reps to attend this event next year!!

## USAS Workshop - Mindy Donofrio

1. Safe sport Conference - Listened to various presentations concerning safe sport. There was one about creating a positive environment within your team. It is important to get the "old school" team mentality gone and understand what "Safe Sport" means. The focus needs to change to a positive environment.
2. DEI discussion - The LSC should go out to their community, board, and athletes to determine their needs. Once the needs are determined, work to see how the LSC can help meet the needs. The LSC would benefit to ask its members what they would like to see from the LSC.
3. Zones - The zone athletes are looking to have an athlete summit. They are looking to invite several athletes from each LSC to the summit. The expected date would be during Olympic Trials. The LSC would cover most of the cost to attend.
4. Communication - It is important to have a plan as to what type of communication the LSC would like to distribute and when the distribution would happen.

Take aways for coaches from the conference...

- Voting at USA HOD. Only 30% of coaches votes were cast in last years HOD. Ways to remedy this issue are...
  - Select coaches who are available and will commit to casting their votes!  
Selections must be selected and registered by July
  - Make sure those coaches are aware that they've been selected know how and to register themselves to vote
  - Have a pre-HOD meeting with selected voting coaches to discuss what they will be voting on (not how they will choose to vote). Educated voters will generate improved results
  - USA HOD takes place in September
- Mental health for athletes/coaches/parents (HUGE TOPIC)
  - Mental health first aid
    - Annual training (similar to CPR)
    - Typically 6 hour course ranging anywhere from \$0-\$200 per person
    - Can be done online (pre reqs required prior to online portion)
    - Intended for coaches to help recognize when an athlete is in distress and give them tools to help the situation at hand
    - [Mental Health First Aid Cert](#)
  - Finding therapists in your area
    - [USOPC Mental health registry](#)
    - USOPC has a list of providers that you can search for by state and topic to find therapists in your area
- Educating parents!
  - Team culture doesn't start by accident or on its own, it's intentional.
  - Parents are a part of the team culture
  - Have meetings with your parents discussing the long term development of athletes for 12&Unders, and separately for 13&Up.
    - 12 & Under topics include...
      - Same age athletes can vary by 5 years biologically
      - Results do not define the race
      - Kids can not control results, they can however control effort
      - Comparisons are uncontrollable (in other words don't use them, you can't control the person they are being compared to)
    - 13 & Up topics include...
      - Doubles being introduced
      - student/athlete time management skills
      - Workouts can be more stroke & athlete specific
      - BIG time drops experienced during 12&under racing is not to be expected or the norm for 13 & up athletes
  - [Engaging with parents](#)
- Health insurance
  - USA Swimming is still offering health insurance through U.S. Equestrian

- [U.S. Equestrian link](#)

## USAS Workshop Report 2023

### Meet Ref Track

Thank you to Charles and South Texas Swimming, for giving me the opportunity me to attend the workshop. I am much more motivated to be more active LSC wide with my meager time and talents as a result of the workshop. I attended the new referee's workshop Hosted by Dana Covington and Marianne Walling.

#### Top items I learned.

1. When Officiating, Start with the Heart, Provide a fair venue, Know your rule book and meet announcement, and the Athletes come first.
2. We are extremely fortunate to have as many OQM in our LSC as we do and we should encourage our officials to use them more for learning and engagement.
3. Our LSC does a much better job in general preparing it's meet referee's for actual meet operations. (I felt way better trained than many of the other attendee's, as the asked really dumb questions.)
4. We had a rather long session on having Crucial Conversation (Tough Conversations), with Coaches, Officials Teams and athletes when required.
  1. We learned about our personal conflict management style.
  2. Being sensitive to body language, outside stressors, tone of voice, and personal risk (money, employment and reputation).
  3. Active Listening,
  4. Eye Contact
  5. And narrowing down the specific issue at hand.
5. We had a discussion about building positive capitol (Good Vibes) with key meet stakeholders, Meet Director, and Coaches, so when crucial conversations happen we start in a positive place instead of a negative one.
6. We discussed at length checking the meet announcement, it was a lot of information.
7. I personally need to increase my HRV and improve my sleep for better health and lower stress.
8. Swim off's for must be completed in the session the occurred in. (I kind of messed this up.).
9. If your leading a workshop and just read the power point to them in a warm room, people will pass out light a frat boy at his first mixer.

I will not be able to attend May 9, as I will be traveling that date. I have attached the power points from my workshop sessions.

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USA Swimming Workshop Report, Denver, April 20-23, 2023

Jessica Evans (attending as Officials Chair)

4/25/2023

### **My Major Take-Aways & Recommendations:**

- This workshop was very informative and helpful and provided a lot of information about on-going initiatives and projects related to officials and officiating. It was very helpful to meet Officials Chairs from other LSCs and learn more about how they deal with various training and mentoring issues, certifications, and recruiting and retention of new and existing officials. It was my impression that LSCs with very active Officials Chairs and Officials Committees have a much higher percentage of officials, compared to the number of swimmers in the LSCs. Some LSCs have 5-10% officials compared to swimmers (South Texas has 2% officials to swimmers). Some LSCs host 2 meets a month and one hosts 2 meets a year. These LSCs had more officials than South Texas, which often hosts 6-8 meets in a single weekend.
- Our LSC did not download OTS history for our ST officials prior to SWIMS 2.0 going offline. Reference is [here](#). The deadline for all renewals has been extended to 12/31/2023. ST has a lot of officials who need to renew because of the dates being extended due to Covid and the transition to SWIMS 3.0.
- Participation in the quarterly Officials Chair meetings via Zoom is encouraged for communication but also to have representation regarding the initiative to standardize training requirements for new officials. I recommend that attending these meetings be a requirement for the Officials Chair or his/her designee.
- ST needs to update its policies and procedures for officials (PPGOs) to include some missing content regarding recertification requirements for all positions and decertification. I am working on this update, currently. The update is also needed to bring the PPGOs in line with current practices.
- ST needs to focus training around the “professional documents” for officials so the expectations are clear, as a way of documenting those expectations, and as a way of intervention and retraining when expectations are not being met. I have recommended that our training materials be updated for rules changes and to include and incorporate the professional documents in these presentations.
- ST currently has no process for evaluating performance or maintaining training requirements when recertifying officials. Officials are recertified based on working a certain number of sessions and the act of renewing their USAS membership, and there is no on-going training or mentoring. I recommend that we proceed with developing this content immediately and use it in our trainings and recertifications.
- ST needs to comply with the requirements of the Ted Stevens Act with regard to officials.

- Signing off on an official's promotion to an initial or new position should not be automatic after completing a certain number of sessions or skills. There should be a clear matrix for promotion and feedback that is specific. The promotion becomes a record of the official's competency and the LSC needs a matrix in place to ensure that competency measures are both specific and mastered. I recommend that we develop a process for certification and begin using it immediately, both as part of the Ted Stevens Act requirements, and also to ensure that our officials are well qualified and supported.
- ST should provide our Meet Referees with information about accommodations and modifications for athletes with disabilities so that there is consistency for these athletes across the LSC. I recommend that we provide this feedback right away.

Notes from the meetings I attended are below.

### **Southern Zone Meeting**

The Age Group Zones meet is decreasing from a 4.5-day to a 3.5-day meet and will be Wednesday through Saturday this year.

Finals will have two heats (instead of one).

They will include relays on the first day with the distance events and are adding a relay event in response to kids who end up with no events on days of the meet.

The meet will take 12 athletes ages 11-12 and 13-14, by gender.

Zones will no longer have athletes ages 15-18 due to past low attendance and conflicts with other meets held during the same part of the swim season.

The shorter meet is to control timelines, address declining attendance for older athletes, and to match championship meet formats with other LSCs. The committee tried to address concerns and suggestions to offer an improved meet format.

The meet will still include disabled athletes ages 15&older.

The Zone meet information is available now and has been sent to the Age Group Chair and General Chair for each LSC.

There may be less attendance by the Texas LSCs due to the Age Group Zones meet being held on the same weekend as TAGS. (The North Texas rep indicated that NT would not be participating this year.)

There is a meeting of the Age Group Chairs scheduled for April 26.



## **Officials Chairs: Is That What You Mean?**

We discussed the current plans for officials' education and certification. USAS is planning to offer an online program for prospective Stroke & Turn Judges first, and then, eventually, for Starter, Admin Official, and Referee. The course would be online, via or linked through SWIMS. The timeline is Spring 2024. The goal is to offer a consistent program for training and certification, and to avoid some issues with inconsistent requirements across the 59 LSCs. The presenters said that the goal was to solicit feedback and participation from all of the LSCs as this training is developed.

Locally, Mike Koleber (Nitro) is a member of the advisory group.

The National Officials Committee (NOC) is seeking volunteers to be on the working group. Contact MJ Truex ([mtruex@usaswimming.org](mailto:mtruex@usaswimming.org)) for more information.

The NOC sent out a survey to better understand the motivation for becoming an official. The survey was sent to officials who have served less than five years. The results of the motivation for becoming an official were as follows (the responses do not add to 100% because the options were "check all that apply"):

- 62% to contribute to the sport and support their children
- 69% to have something to do at swim meets
- 53% to fulfill a volunteer requirement of their child's club
- 40% because someone other than a coach asked them to officiate
- 33% because the coach asked them to officiate
- 13% because they aspired to officiate at the top level of the sport

The average age of the official's child when the official became certified was 10 years old.

The survey asked respondents about the clinic or class they attended as part of their certification and the following items were requested:

- How to fill out a DQ slip
- More information about the pathway for officiating (such as how to progress from S&T to Starter)
- Video examples of young, developmental swimmers for learning about strokes (instead of the current video, which has collegiate athletes swimming "incorrectly")
- "Day in the life" of an official so new officials know what to expect at a swim meet
- Video examples of calls (again, using real athletes and not actors)

We discussed the certification process and the goals for the future:

- Standardized across LSCs so it's easier to transfer and for consistency in officiating/training

- Faster ways to “level up” with clear and consistent paths to Starter, Deck Referee, and Referee
- Making evaluations more accessible (on the local deck and not just on the national deck)
- Moving to competency-based evaluations by providing a rubric for certification and recertification used by all LSCs
- Faster paths to certification for swimmers and people who have existing swimming knowledge
- New officials overwhelmingly indicated that they wanted more mentorship from senior officials

The survey asked new officials for the “best” and “worst” part of the certification process.

**Best:**

- Hands on
- Asking questions
- Real-life examples on the deck
- Time to practice learning
- Meeting new people
- Increased confidence when working with a mentor
- Different learning styles from and with others
- Camaraderie

**Worst:**

- Not everyone is a good mentor
- Too hierarchical
- Different messages from different people adds confusion
- Inconsistent messages
- Discriminatory
- Lack of access to evaluations
- Some mentors show no patience for teaching/learning

The timeline for this program is 1-3 years, with a goal of rolling out the S&T training in Spring, 2024 and other modules after that. The program is funded for three years.

**The Ted Stevens Act (led by Clark Hammond)**

The Ted Stevens Act (TSA) is the legal framework for protecting participants in a national governing body (NGB) sport. Every member of the NGB is a “participant,” and in USAS this includes athletes, coaches, officials, and other members.

The TSA defines participation as an equal opportunity for everyone.

USAS is required by the TSA to investigate a denial of the right to participate, and this includes officials.

The National Board of Review (NBOR) acts as a hearing body for LSCs and members when an issue cannot be resolved at the LSC level.

The TSA does not include violations of the Code of Conduct (CoC) as a basis for being denied participation. However, the TSA mandates that there must be documentation for the denial. The steps of documentation include:

- Verbal warning (with a third-party present to witness)
- Written reprimand (that is signed by both parties and sent to the Officials Chair for recordkeeping)
- Reassignment and/or retraining to correct the issue, with documentation of the effort to do so
- Suspension
- Decertification

Of note, decertification does not remove membership; however, for officials, it essentially removes participation. The final step, should the individual choose to do so, is a lawsuit. There are four such lawsuits to date involving decertification. The goal of each LSC should be not to move past “reassignment and retraining.”

A conduct problem/concern at a swim meet can result in the Meet Referee thanking the official for coming to the meet but letting them know that their services are no longer needed at that meet. This is not a TSA violation.

Every LSC must have procedures that specify what is needed for officials to continue serving in each position. This is a different issue from decertifying the official.

Every LSC must have recertification criteria that are specific, so that failure to perform the specified duties can be a documented event that causes the loss of a certification. If the LSC has followed procedures and removes a certification for “cause,” then there is no TSA violation. However, the issues must be documented, discussed with the individual and with a plan to improve, and a timeline. The goal is not to decertify but to fail to recertify. The timeline of recertifying every year or every two years provides time for education and retraining, with an end date for choosing not to recertify. It is important and vital for any official who is at risk of not being recertified to know that this is a potential outcome. When done properly, there is no TSA violation.

Derek Paul (Rules & Regs Chair, USAS) discussed the timeline for rules changes from World Aquatics (formerly FINA), now that World Aquatics can pass rule changes at any meeting and not just at its annual congress. USAS does not have to implement rules changes immediately. Because rules can change more frequently, USAS will post red-lined changes to specific rules on

the [USAS Rules & Regulations](#) page and provide downloadable documents for keeping with an the printed rulebook. The entire rulebook will not be reprinted or reposted as a PDF due to cost and typesetting issues.

There were two recent rules changes that World Aquatics adopted. The rule allowing the swimmer to be submerged at the finish of the backstroke went into effect immediately by decision of USAS. World Aquatics has a pending interpretation of what the “act of finishing” actually describes. For now, Derek asked officials not to interpret the rule, but rather, to follow it as printed. If World Aquatics issues an interpretation, Derek will send it to all USAS officials. The new rule for Starters to begin the race with “take your marks,” instead of “take your mark,” also went into effect immediately.

Derek mentioned the “Our Kids Initiative” website, which includes an updated reference indicating the rules differences between USAS and NFHS, NCAA, USMS, and YMCA rules for meets. A link to this site is [here](#) and is included on the USAS About->Officials page.

### **Categories of Complaints (led by Kathleen Scandary)**

This session continued to focus on the TSA and how it impacts officials, with some information provided to start connecting some dots.

The professional documents for officiating ([found here](#) and in the section for Officials Training -> Professional Documents for Each Position pill) should be in every Meet Referee’s notebook and should be given to prospective officials and officials training in new positions as a way of describing the expectations for officials in a clear and positive manner. Clinic leaders and mentors should reference these documents when training and mentoring others, so that all officials have a way of understanding what to do and as feedback for how they are doing.

The professional documents are an ideal way of preventing future TSA issues, because they provide the foundation for issues regarding professionalism or skills.

Every LSC should include requirements for professionalism and competency for officials. All meets should mirror these expectations in officials briefings and during the meet so that it’s clear what the expectations are for officials.

Signing off on someone’s promotion to an initial or new position should not be automatic after completing a certain number of sessions or skills. There should be a clear matrix for promotion and feedback that is specific. Signing off on someone becomes part of their record indicating “competency.” If the official is not truly “competent,” then it becomes harder to recertify/decertify later. Competency needs to be considered in terms of whether they were trained correctly and consistently, mentored, had sufficient support, and so forth. Every LSC needs to provide clear direction to mentors to ensure consistency.

Complaints against an official (or any other member) should always be submitted in writing, so there is documentation. The Officials Chair is responsible for storing complaints. If a new official comes to your LSC, you should always check with the Officials Chair in the former LSC to ask if there are any issues. USAS has several officials transferring LSCs and causing the same problems in each one. In many cases, the new LSC failed to inquire about any issues so these people were effectively “starting over” in each LSC.

### **Legislative Review Session (Rules & Regs Committee)**

This session was a preview of the proposed changes for the USAS Annual Business Meeting. The goal was to discuss changes early, so there would be time to incorporate feedback and to make changes prior to the meeting in September.

The panel discussed the proposed legislative changes that are being discussed and prepared by the committee. All changes were agreeable to the membership. The only one with discussion was related to Article 105.1 (swimmers with disabilities).

“Accommodation” is the time that the athlete is not on the blocks and swimming. Accommodations include entering the facility, restroom/locker room access, getting on and around the deck, etc.

“Modifications” are related to the rules of swimming, including getting on the blocks, starting the race, swimming the race, and ending the race. The Meet Referee is responsible for modifications related to the swimmer’s disability. The Meet Referee should communicate with the Deck Referee and Starter about any modifications and should decide on and specify which modifications are needed.

The Meet Referee may decide how to implement the modifications. There were two options discussed. First is to manage a disqualification just like any other, and then vet the call to include the Article 105 modifications. The second is to inform the officials about the modifications, and not to make a call unless it is outside the modifications. For example, if a swimmer is missing an arm, then the call might be a one-hand touch, which would be vetted and overruled. Or, the stroke judge would not make the call, because of the modification.

The feedback from the membership was not to use the first method, because it might draw attention to the swimmer. The committee discussed using a meet accommodation form so the information needed could be standardized. In all cases, it’s the responsibility of the swimmer’s coach to communicate any necessary modifications with the meet entries so the facility staff and Meet Referee are prepared to assist the swimmer.

## **Effective Communication: Part 1 – Goal-Oriented Communication**

We started this session with questions related to previous sessions.

Clarifications:

- The minimum number of training sessions for prospective Stroke & Turn Judges is four and that will likely continue to be the minimum number required in the new standardized training. The goal is to make it *easier* to get certified.
- The minimum number of sessions is *not intended* to complete four sessions and then certify. Some officials will require additional sessions. The goal is effective training and efficiency. If someone with a swimming background understands the rules quickly, you can certify them faster. If someone is very new and needs additional sessions to understand the rules, you can extend their training until they are ready.

Upon review of all 59 LSCs, the committee learned that the requirements can vary substantially between LSCs. USAS wants one path to certification and not 59 different sets of requirements by the 59 LSCs, both for consistency and also to make it easier for officials to transfer to another LSC.

The National Officials Committee is working on documenting the duties of the Officials Chair and Officials Committee at the LSC level. This may be included in a future workshop. It was noted that most Officials Chairs are very actively involved but some are absent.

This session dealt with learning different types of communication (verbal and non-verbal, biases, and so forth).

## **Effective Communication: Part 2 – Focus and De-escalation Techniques**

This session continued the discussion of the previous day about types of communication and how to deal with officials in different types of situations that may cause the official to be reassigned or removed from the deck.

Liz Hahn (Safe Sport Director) led an activity with the group about boundaries, where you had to pick a partner and switch partners at her direction and touch the indicated body part (palm to palm, elbow to elbow, nose to nose, etc.). This was an interesting activity, showing how some people will participate past their comfort level due to the group dynamic. Some people were uncomfortable at different times during the activity. It was a reminder that everyone has boundaries in terms of their personal space but might not be as assertive in defending it, and to always be recognizing the boundaries of others based on their body language and verbalizations.

We discussed techniques for de-escalation:

- Focused conversations
- Listening to the other person's perspective
- Active listening (engaged with eye contact and positive body language)
- Recognizing intent vs perception
- Understanding that when a conversation or incident makes you uncomfortable it does not necessarily mean that it's a Safe Sport issue

"Tough conversations are courageous conversations." Have a conversation, not a confrontation.

In the case of an issue on deck with a coach, athlete, or official, the Meet Referee should document any "crucial moments" caused by any individual. This might include someone you were paying attention to (because of their behavior) and intervening with (such as a coach berating an athlete). The Meet Referee should document the issue in writing and be as concise as possible, and then give that information to the Officials Chair. If possible, also notify the head coach of a team when something happens. Documentation is needed so that patterns can be recognized and recorded for action.

Any Code of Conduct violation should be immediately reported to the appropriate agency (police, social services, Safe Sport).

### **Documentation is Key: Performance Improvement Plan (or Performance Development Plan)**

This session focused on what to do when an official is not meeting expectations, in terms of correctly applying the rules of swimming or in terms of behavior.

We were strongly encouraged to use the professional documents in training, mentoring, and promoting officials, and to refer to them when retraining is needed. When mentoring, we use the rule book, the educational materials in officials clinics, the protocols given at the meets, and the professional documents. These items, together, encompass the "expectations" for officials and should be utilized, referenced, and discussed frequently.

A Performance Improvement Plan or Performance Development Plan is a written document that is offered to positively impact the official's knowledge and professionalism. If needed:

- The Meet Referee should provide it at the meet
- Meet with the person to explain, listen, and mentor
- Offer the PIP/PDP in writing and have both parties sign
- Send it to the Officials Chair

What happens next?

If the matter is substantial (the official did not agree with the feedback, the issue is repeating itself, etc.), the concern should be evaluated by a committee, which might be the Officials Committee or impartial designees.

The committee should provide notice of the hearing in writing, with a response request in 10 days. Send it with a “read receipt.” If there is no response, send it via certified mail. If the official refuses to respond or meet, then it rises to the level of the General Counsel for USAS and the National Board of Review.

The meeting should be recorded.

It was noted that anyone involved in a PIP/PDP is covered by USAS insurance, as long as the proper steps were followed *and* the individual can prove that he or she was acting as a volunteer of USA Swimming. USAS insurance will cover the cost of any lawsuits when all conditions have been met for acting in the capacity of USAS.

### **LSC Policies & Procedures (led by Clark Hammond)**

We discussed the issues of certification, decertification, and recertification for officials, in the context of current procedures and the Ted Stevens Act.

The National Officials Committee (NOC) will be working to establish consistent requirements for certifications and renewals for officials in all positions. They are working on Stroke & Turn Judges first. The plan is for all 59 LSCs to have education and training modules available through SWIMS and to make the requirements the same for everyone. USAS currently has minimum certification requirements, and some LSCs use those requirements and others require much more. This makes transfers difficult between LSCs.

The NOC members and Officials Chairs will be asked to collaborate on the requirements and development of the modules. It is important for all LSCs to be involved as many LSCs have unique situations due to geography, lack of meets, short seasons due to climate, and so forth.

Certifications for officials should clearly specify their duties and responsibilities, and all requirements including the background check, APT, concussion training, and so forth as mandated by USAS. Policies should also develop officials who are encouraged to participate in OQM meets and training for the national deck. Travel reimbursements for officials should be clear. LSCs should stipulate whether officials must reside in the LSC geography to attach to the LSC and/or be eligible for reimbursements.

For athletes and other committee membership, the LSC should ask interested people to complete a form or other public document so that opportunities for involvement are clearly communicated to and available to all members of the LSC equally. LSCs, committee chairs, and General Chairs who hand pick membership without broader communication and solicitation for



new members create an appearance of unfairness and bias that should be avoided by posting openings and promoting membership to all.

When officials transfer from another LSC, the Officials Chair should contact the old LSC to verify credentials but should also use this as an opportunity to see if there are any issues with the LSC. (There are some officials moving LSCs due to conflicts, and those conflicts need to be understood and communicated, so they can be documented sooner rather than later in the event of a Code of Conduct issue.)

All LSCs should have an Officials Code of Conduct that they develop, use, and enforce, to set clear expectations for officials and also to promote a positive culture for the LSC. The Officials Code of Conduct should stipulate processes for Profession Competency (qualifications or deficiencies on the technical side of officiating), Professional Misconduct (on or off the deck or during meetings that are related to the conduct of officiating), and Intentional Misconduct (actions that are potential USAS Code of Conduct violations under Article 304.3 or Safe Sport violations). The Officials Code of Conduct should identify the person in the LSC who has primary responsibility for the category of the complaint (Officials Chair, Officials Committee, other designated member of committee, etc.) and the potential action to be taken (remediation, performance improvement plan, correction, discipline, decertification, etc.).

Sample documents for the Officials Code of Conduct, the Categories of Complaints, and the Performance Improvement Plan are attached.



## LSC: Performance Development Plan

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of Occurrence \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Official \_\_\_\_\_ Team \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Meet \_\_\_\_\_ Position on Deck \_\_\_\_\_

Situation \_\_\_\_\_

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Expectation (Reference *Professional Document*)

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Response \_\_\_\_\_

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Action

Plan \_\_\_\_\_

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Timeline \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Assigned \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by \_\_\_\_\_

*Send to XYZ Officials Chair at...*

# [LSC Template]

**XXX**

## **Code of Officials Conduct (CofC)**

**Effective: \_\_\_\_\_, 2023**

I. Each Non-Athlete Member of USA Swimming is bound by the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and the Center for SafeSport Code. In addition, non-Athlete members must abide by the XXX Code of Conduct (“XXX Code”). The following XXX Code pertain to activities where officials or administrators (“Officials”) represent XXX, in or outside the LSC, including practices, meets, camps, meetings, and clinics:

- A. Officials bear a great responsibility for engendering public confidence in swimming.
- B. Officials shall be impartial and fair when judging swimming competitions.
- C. Officials shall hold and maintain the basic tenets of officiating which include integrity, neutrality, respect, sensitivity, professionalism, discretion and tactfulness.
- D. Officials shall master both the rules of swimming and the means to enforce the rules and shall exercise authority in an impartial and controlled manner.
- E. Officials shall uphold the honor and dignity of the profession in all interactions with athletes, coaches, parents, volunteers, colleagues and the public.
- F. Officials shall recognize that anything which may lead to a conflict of interest, either real or apparent, must be avoided.
- G. Officials shall dress neatly and appropriately and shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the high standards of the profession.
- H. Officials shall be punctual and professional in the fulfillment of all officiating commitments.
- I. Officials shall work with each other and XXX in a constructive and cooperative manner.
- J. Officials shall resist every temptation and outside pressure to use one’s position as an official to benefit oneself.
- K. Officials shall not make false or misleading statements regarding their qualifications, certifications, experience, training or competence.
- L. Officials shall accept responsibility for all actions taken.
- M. Officials shall strive to insure a safe and healthy environment for all members of XXX during competitions, especially the athletes.
- N. Officials shall consistently, accurately, and equitably apply rules, regulations, and codes of conduct of USA Swimming, the Center for SafeSport and XXX.
- O. Officials shall refrain from making posts on social media criticizing calls made by officials in swimming competitions or criticizing a call they saw on TV or on some

internet or streaming service in connection with a swimming competition.

II. Subject to informal or formal proceedings, the failure to comply with any XXX Code of Conduct rule may result in any of the disciplinary actions:

- A. A warning
- B. A reprimand
- C. Reassignment
- D. Re-education
- E. Suspension
- F. Decertification

III. **Discipline or De-Certification:** First and foremost, discipline or de-certification does not remove membership in USA Swimming; however, the basis for de-certification may also require referral to the National Board of Review. There are three categories that have been chosen which should cover all possible situations and issues that could arise. The three categories that discipline or de-certification can occur are:

- A. **Professional qualifications.** This category deals mainly with the official's lack of knowledge or application of the rules. For example, a certified S&T who never makes calls or incorrectly makes the same call repeatedly.
- B. **Professional misconduct.** This category addresses violations of the above XXX Code of Conduct.
- C. **Code of Conduct.** This category addresses violations of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct or the Center of SafeSport Code.

Except for Code of Conduct violations, in all other cases, the XXX Officials chair or their designee shall endeavor to resolve the matter informally. If an informal resolution is not reached, the formal complaint process and hearing by the XXX Officials Committee must take place before an official can be disciplined or decertified. In accordance with the established procedures of XXX and USAS the general process is as follows:

(1) A written complaint is received by the XXX Officials Chair.

(2) The XXX Officials Committee investigates the complaint.

(3) If the committee finds that there is sufficient evidence of a violation of the XXX Code, then after fair notice, a hearing before the XXX Officials Committee will be scheduled in a timely manner. The official and any complainant will be given the opportunity to present their position to the Committee. (It is a good practice to record the hearing)

(4) After the hearing, the XXX Officials Committee decides either to dismiss, discipline, de-certify, or forward the matter to the NBoR.

(5) If the decision is to de-certify or recommend referral to the NBoR, a written finding of fact and decision must be done. In the case of de-certification this document must be sent to the person who is being de-certified to allow them to appeal to the NBoR.



**OFFICIALS**  
**GENERAL GUIDELINES**  
**FOR**  
**REMEDATION, DISCIPLINE, AND DE-CERTIFICATION**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>POTENTIAL ACTION</b>	<b>EXAMPLE</b>
<p><b>1 – Professional Competency:</b>            Qualifications            Or Deficiencies of the            Technical Side</p>	<p>LSC Officials Chair            Or            Designated Official, or            Committee Member</p>	<p>Remediation:             Performance Improvement Plan is completed.            This is not a punitive action plan.</p>	<p>Certified S&amp;T never makes calls or incorrectly makes the same call repeatedly.</p>
<p><b>2 - Professional Misconduct:</b>            On or Off the Deck or            During Meetings That            Are Related to the            Conduct of Officiating</p>	<p>LSC Officials Chair            Or            Upon request,            Investigation may be            conducted by a            Member of The            Officials Committee            or respected and            impartial Senior            Official</p>	<p>Correction:             After Investigation, OC (if not the investigator) and at least one committee member(s), meet with Official where Performance Improvement Plan is discussed and completed.</p>	<p>-An experienced Official berates the MR or another official in front of spectators over their displeasure about how the meet is run or their position on deck.            -Exhibits rude, boisterous treatment of event staff for poor hospitality.            Official is known for such outbursts.</p>
<p><b>3 – Intentional Misconduct:</b>            Actions that are            Potential Code of            Conduct Violations            Article 304.3            or            SafeSport</p>	<p>LSC Officials Chair must first determine if the behavior is egregious enough to inform the Chair of the NBOR.             There may be fact finding that will still begin at LSC level and the location of the occurrence.</p>	<p>Discipline/ Suspension/ probation/Decertification:            Collect pertinent documents: printouts, administrative papers, and statements from officials and referees on site. Be vigilant in providing no opinions or hasty judgement. Officials Committee meets with official. Inform LSC GC.</p>	<p>-A referee repeatedly shows favoritism toward team(s) or coaches and provides special considerations to their athletes such as changing place (OOF), times, or overturning disqualifications without sound reason.</p>