

Sanctions/Recognitions

General Information

Sanctioning and recognizing events is a crucial function of the LMSC. Care must be taken to ensure the event hosts follow the requirements of article 202 in the USMS rule book. Each LMSC should have a sanctions chair responsible for all phases of the process, including early scheduling to avoid conflicts or overlaps, and follow-up with the Top Ten recorder to ensure meet results are submitted in a timely manner. There must be good two-way communication.

ALL competitors in sanctioned events must be USMS members or a member of a FINA-recognized national governing body for Masters swimming. This is necessary for the safety and enjoyment of the swimmers, for liability and excess personal accident insurance coverage to be in force, and for official consideration of performances. Times achieved at sanctioned events, conducted in strict compliance with all mandatory swimming rules of the USMS rule book, as defined in part 1, are considered for USMS national records, USMS Top Ten times, and FINA world records. For additional information on insurance coverage, refer to the “Insurance Swim Meet Coverage Grid” in this handbook.

In a recognized event, swimmers are not required to be USMS members. Only USMS members are covered by liability and excess personal accident insurance. For additional information on insurance coverage, refer to the “Insurance Swim Meet Coverage Grid” in this handbook. Times achieved at events may be considered for USMS national records and Top Ten times if the event has been granted recognition and a designated USMS observer is present and verifies in writing that the conduct of the competition conforms to the relevant USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations. Times achieved at events sanctioned by USA Swimming or SCN, or FINA championships, shall be considered for USMS national records and Top Ten times without formal application for recognition. It is the responsibility of the swimmer to submit times obtained in recognized events, along with complete documentation, to the appropriate LMSC Top Ten recorder and the Records and Tabulation Committee chair.

Sanctioned and recognized events should be assigned consistent, identifying numbers. A suggested numbering system is XXY-000, where XX is the LMSC numerical code, Y is the last digit of the current year, and 000 the consecutive numbering. Recognized events may be indicated by “R” in the number. Open water events may be indicated by “OW” in the number. For example:

- 567-OW001 would be assigned to the first open water event sanctioned in the Alaska LMSC during 2007
- 057-005 would be assigned to the fifth sanctioned pool meet during 2007
- 397-R003 would be assigned to the third recognized pool meet during 2007

Your LMSC should develop a sanctions/recognitions packet to supply to organizations requesting sanction or recognition, which should include:

- The application for sanction or recognition
- Suggestions for warm-up and warm-down
- Guidelines for preparing the entry form and meet results
- Certificates of insurance (if requested)
- “Report of Occurrence” form (used to report **ALL** incidents, no matter how minor)

A copy of the current USMS rule book is **required** to be available at the event (all registered USMS clubs receive a copy of the rule book). The meet host should be made aware that the rule book may be obtained from the National Office for \$9. Some LMSCs purchase a modest quantity of the rule books for such a purpose. Other welcome information for the meet host includes current records, application for national records, official relay cards, and a brief description of USMS insurance coverage.

Online Event Entry – Preliminary Guidance To Sanctions Chairs

Before issuing a sanction for an event that will utilize online entry, the Sanctions Chair must receive assurance of the following from the event host:

- The online entry system must include the language of the liability release set forth in USMS Rule 203.1, or 301.3 for open water events, and an affirmative method for indicating acceptance of the liability waiver (e.g., "I accept" button). The liability release and acceptance should be designed in such a manner that it is clear to the entrant that he or she is accepting the terms of the liability release.

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- The online entry system must operate such that the entrant may not proceed to completion of the entry without affirmatively clicking acceptance of the liability waiver.
- Records that evidence acceptance of the liability release must be maintained by the event director or sanctioning LMSC for at least the period of the personal injury or wrongful death statute of limitations, whichever is longer, for the state in which the event takes place. The last search of such statutes of limitations in 2004 revealed that the longest state period was six years.
- The online entry system must include a method for determining within reason that the entrant is the person accepting the liability release.
- The event director must verify that the entrant/participant is a USMS member, consistent with USMS Rule 202.1.1F(4). This may include such methods as electronic verification of the USMS membership number or requiring participants to show their USMS membership cards prior to participating on the day of the event.
- While in-person signing of the liability release on the day of the event is not required, sanctions chairs and event directors are free to include this requirement for extra assurance of compliance with the release requirement.
- USMS National Championships (both pool and long distance) shall allow entrants to register for the event on paper even if online entry is utilized.

Other important points:

- See article 202.1.1A(1) for adding additional insureds to the liability release statement.
- The liability release must appear **EXACTLY** as in article 203.1, including **CAPITALIZATIONS**.
- A copy of the registration card, or proof of registration acceptable to the LMSC, must accompany all entries.
- There must be at least two officials. The referee must be certified as a stroke and turn judge, starter, or referee by USA Swimming, YMCA, or any other USMS-approved certifying body (see appendix B of the USMS rule book for the complete list of approved certifying bodies).
- All pools used in competition must be in strict compliance with mandatory facilities standards, including pool length, in order for times to be accepted for USMS Top Ten and record consideration. A “Pool Length Certification Form” must be on file with USMS or attached with the “Application for Sanction.” However, sanctions may be issued for events contested in pools that do *not* meet minimum USMS facilities standards. In these cases, results cannot be considered for USMS Top Ten and records. Meet information for contests in such pools, including meet entry forms and heat sheets, must clearly state **“Times achieved at this competition will not be submitted for USMS Top Ten or record consideration.”**
- In addition, pools using a moveable bulkhead must also have their length verified after each session. “Pool Length Certification Forms” from each session must be included with any USMS record application and with results sent to the LMSC Top Ten recorder.
- Application for sanction/recognition of events within the jurisdiction of USMS shall be made to the LMSC within which the event is to be held, or in the case of open water sanctions, to the LMSC where the event originates.
- All sanctions shall be signed by the LMSC’s authorized representative, and a record thereof shall be retained for 2 years.
- Sanctions issued to one organization cannot be transferred to another. No sanction may be issued to any organization whose interest in sports and games is purely commercial, or where the event is to be promoted solely for the profit or the advertising value to be derived therefrom.
- If no separate facility is available, provisions for warm-up/warm-down **MUST** be made as follows (see page 9 of this section of the handbook):
 - In pools of five lanes or more, one lane shall be set aside for continuous warm-up/warm-down during the conduct of the meet.
 - In pools of fewer than five lanes, swimmers shall be allowed to swim to the other end of the pool at the end of each heat, and a warm-up/warm-down period shall be offered at least once during each half-hour of competition.

USMS, through the LMSC, has an obligation to its swimmers to ensure a well-run and properly reported competition. The sanctions chair should be aware of the past performance of meet hosts and call particular attention to any prior deficiencies. Further sanctions may be denied to an organization failing to live up to its obligation to conduct such events in accordance with applicable USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations or as stated on the entry form.

Note: For open water events, there is a separate application for sanction.

For all competitions, only Risk Management Services, Inc., may issue the additional insured endorsements.



APPLICATION FOR SANCTION

The following package must be submitted to apply for a sanction.

1. This completed application
2. Copy of proposed meet announcement/entry form, where applicable. Do not distribute forms until official sanction is received. The sanction number must be shown on the final form.
3. A check in the amount of \$_____ for the sanction fee.

An event sanctioned by USMS, Inc., through one of its Local Masters Swimming Committees (LMSC), must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Conduct of the event must be in strict compliance with applicable swimming rules and administrative regulations of USMS, Inc. A current USMS rule book must be available at the event.
2. The referee shall be certified as a stroke and turn judge, starter, or referee by USA Swimming, YMCA, or any other USMS-approved certifying body. See article 103 of the USMS rule book for certification requirements.
3. All competitors must hold current USMS registrations or valid travel permits or their equivalents, or have other acceptable proof of current Masters swimming registration, and must be 18 years of age or over. The entry form must contain the following clause, **INCLUDING THE CAPITALIZATION**, and it must be signed by each person entering the meet:

I, the undersigned participant, intending to be legally bound, hereby certify that I am physically fit and have not been otherwise informed by a physician. I acknowledge that I am aware of all the risks inherent in Masters swimming (training and competition), including possible permanent disability or death, and agree to assume all of those risks. AS A CONDITION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE MASTERS SWIMMING PROGRAM OR ANY ACTIVITIES INCIDENT THERETO, I HEREBY WAIVE ANY AND ALL RIGHTS TO CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES, INCLUDING ALL CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE, ACTIVE OR PASSIVE, OF THE FOLLOWING: UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING, INC., THE LOCAL MASTERS SWIMMING COMMITTEES, THE CLUBS, HOST FACILITIES, MEET SPONSORS, MEET COMMITTEES, OR ANY INDIVIDUALS OFFICIATING AT THE MEETS OR SUPERVISING SUCH ACTIVITIES. In addition, I agree to abide by and be governed by the rules of USMS. (rule book article 203.1)

5. Entry blanks and programs must bear the statement "Sanctioned by (LMSC name) for USMS, Inc." and the sanction number.
6. If this event is a competition and the pool does not meet mandatory facilities standards, then entry blanks and programs must bear the statement "Times achieved at this competition will not be submitted for USMS Top Ten or record consideration." This language must immediately follow the sanction statement described in paragraph 5 above.
7. The word "Olympic" or any derivative thereof may not be used in any manner in connection with the event unless consent is obtained from the United States Olympic Committee (USOC).
8. If this event is a competition, results and required facility certifications must be submitted in proper format within 14 days of the event to the LMSC Top Ten recorder and sanctions chair (article 103.5 of the USMS rule book). See appendix B of the rule book (PREPARATION OF MEET RESULTS and POOL LENGTH CERTIFICATION form) for proper format.

Name of club/organization _____ * * * * *
 _____ hereby applies for a sanction to hold a swimming
 _____ competition _____ clinic _____ exhibition _____ other; to be held at _____
 on _____ and agrees that the above will be conducted in accordance with the applicable USMS rules
 and regulations.

_____ Signature of requestor	_____ Name
_____ Title of requestor	_____ Address
_____ Date submitted	_____ Telephone

Make check for \$_____ payable to: _____
 Send completed package to:

LMSC Sanctions Chair

Address

Telephone



**United States Masters Swimming
APPLICATION FOR RECOGNITION**

The following package must be submitted to apply for a recognition.

1. This completed application.
2. Copy of proposed meet announcement/entry form, where applicable. Do not distribute forms until official recognition is received. The recognition number must be shown on the final form.
3. A check in the amount of \$_____ for the recognition fee.

An event recognized by USMS, Inc., through one of its Local Masters Swimming Committees (LMSC), must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Conduct of the event must be in strict compliance with applicable swimming rules and administrative regulations of USMS, Inc. A current USMS rule book must be available at the event.
2. Recognition for any meets held outside the jurisdiction of USMS, other than those organized under the auspices of FINA, shall be obtained from the Executive Committee.
3. Any income derived from the event must be used for the general welfare of the promoting organization as a whole. A recognition may not be issued to any organization whose interest in sports and games is purely commercial, or where the event is to be promoted solely for the profit or the advertising value to be derived therefrom.
4. Times achieved at events may be considered for USMS national records and Top Ten times if the event has been granted recognition and a designated USMS observer is present and verifies in writing that the conduct of the competition conforms to the relevant USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations. Times achieved at events sanctioned by USA Swimming or SCN, or at FINA championships, and conducted in strict compliance with all mandatory USMS swimming rules, as defined in part 1 of the USMS rule book, shall be considered for USMS national records and Top Ten times without formal application for recognition. It is the responsibility of the swimmer to submit times obtained in recognized events with complete documentation to the appropriate LMSC Top Ten recorder and the Records and Tabulation Committee chair.
5. If this event is a competition, results and required facility certifications must be submitted in proper format within 14 days of the event to the LMSC Top Ten recorder and sanctions chair (article 103.5 of the USMS rule book). See appendix B of the rule book (PREPARATION OF MEET RESULTS and POOL LENGTH CERTIFICATION form) for proper format.

* * * *

Name of club/
organization _____ hereby applies for recognition to hold a swimming:
____competition ____ clinic ____ exhibition ____ other; to be held at _____

on _____ and agrees that the above will be conducted in accordance with the applicable USMS rules and regulations.

_____ Signature of requestor	_____ Name
_____ Title of requestor	_____ Address
_____ Date submitted	_____ Telephone

Make check for \$_____ payable to: _____
Send completed package to:

LMSC Sanctions Chair

Address

Telephone



**United States Masters Swimming
OPEN WATER/LONG DISTANCE OFFICIAL SANCTION**

This sanction is issued to: _____

for the following _____

to be held at _____ on _____

1. The sanction is issued under the condition that all USMS, Inc., swimming rules and administrative regulations and local rules and regulations shall be followed.
2. The rules are listed in the current edition of the USMS rule book. It is a condition of this sanction that the rule book shall be available at the meet.
3. This sanction is not transferable.
4. If this event is a competition, the results and required facility certifications shall be submitted within 14 days of the conclusion of the event in the proper format to:

_____ and _____
Top Ten Recorder Sanctions Chair

_____ Address _____
_____ Address _____

Sanction issued by:

Official name of LMSC

Address

Signature of Sanctions Chair

Phone number

Sanction number

Date issued

Guidelines for Warm-Up/Warm-Down

To ensure the safety of all swimmers during the warm-up and warm-down period, we ask that you read and practice the following suggestions:

Competition Pool(s)

1. During the first 30 minutes of the warm-up period all lanes should be used for general swimming. After the first 30 minutes, one or more lanes may be designated as sprint lanes. In sprint lanes, swimmers swim in one direction only down the center of the lane. A dive off the blocks or a backstroke start is permitted only in the sprint lanes. Swimmers should leave the sprint lane when they reach the end of the pool.
2. All other lanes are for continuous swimming in a circle pattern, with swimmers staying as close to the right side of the lane as is practical. Swimmers should be considerate of others, by swimming in a speed-appropriate lane and allowing other swimmers space at the walls to turn. Lanes should be designated slow, medium, and fast. No dives, backstroke starts, or jumping entry is permitted in these lanes at any time during warm-ups. "No Diving" signs must be posted on the blocks for these lanes.
3. At no time during warm-up shall swimmers be permitted to enter any lane by jumping into the water from the sides or ends of the pool. Swimmers must enter the pool feet first in a cautious manner. Diving is permitted only from the blocks in the designated sprint lanes.
4. At the referee's discretion, swimmers may be disqualified from competition for diving into the pool during warm-up.
5. No hand paddles are allowed. Kickboards and pull buoys may be permitted.
6. Swimmers are requested to leave the pool when they have finished their warm-up to provide other swimmers an opportunity for adequate warm-up.
7. It is recommended that:
 - A. Marshals at each end of the pool monitor and enforce these safety guidelines.
 - B. An announcer facilitate the conduct of the warm-up.
 - C. A qualified lifeguard be on duty throughout the warm-up period.

Warm-Up/Warm-Down During Competition

1. The same safety regulations as stated above are enforced, except there need not be a sprint lane. However, if space permits, one sprint lane may be available and marked appropriately.
2. If there is no other warm-up/warm-down area available in pools of five lanes or more, one lane must be set aside for warm-up/warm-down during the conduct of the meet. If there is no other warm-up/warm-down area available in pools of four or fewer lanes, swimmers may swim to the other end of the pool at the end of each heat, and a warm-up/warm-down period must be offered at least once during each half-hour of competition (article 102.4.1).
3. Swimmers must enter the pool feet first in a cautious and controlled manner. Diving shall be permitted only in the designated lanes (article 102.4.2 of the USMS rule book).