

## ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON THE STEPS TO BECOMING A STROKE & TURN OFFICIAL

Below is additional information and specific links to help complete each of the steps to become a USA Swimming Stroke & Turn Official. Each of these correspond to the steps listed on page 1 of the [Stroke & Turn Apprenticeship Form](#). The steps are presented in general order, however, the actual order of completion may vary.

### A. Stroke & Turn Clinic or Info Session

Participate in training either through an info session, clinic, or on-deck orientation. This is not required but a good way to get started. The [www.mnswim.org](http://www.mnswim.org) website will often publish upcoming sessions or check with an Official in your club for more info. Another good website for general information is [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)

### B. Complete Your First Shadow session

Shadowing at a meet is your chance to 'ride-along' with an experienced Official to learn more about being a Stroke & Turn Official. Your first shadow is a chance to learn the basics and see if officiating is for you. Check-in with the Deck Referee during the Meet Warm-ups and he or she will get you started. There is an Officials Meeting in the Hospitality room that starts 45 to 60 minutes before the first race. If possible, wear Khaki pants/shorts/skirt and a white shirt (preferred but not required for shadowing.)

### C. Stroke & Turn Training Videos

USA Swimming provides good online video clips for judging the strokes. The videos present a lot of info very quickly, don't try to memorize it all as there will be more chance to learn the rules during shadowing.

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site ([www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)) home page.
- From the menu bar select FOR YOU > OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS page in the options toward the bottom, select OFFICIALS TRAINING VIDEOS.
- On the [OFFICIALS TRAINING VIDEOS page](#), select the video that you want to review. Watch the Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Freestyle, Individual Medley, and Relay Start videos.

### D. USA Swimming Non-Athlete Membership

After your first shadow session, and if you decide to go forward with Officiating, you should register with USA Swimming as a Non-Athlete Member. This can be done through Minnesota Swimming. To register with Minnesota Swimming for a Non-Athlete membership:

- Go to the Minnesota Swimming Web site ([www.mnswim.org](http://www.mnswim.org)) home page.
  - From the menu bar select Documents/Resources > Coaches | Non-Athletes
  - On the Documents: Coaches | Non-Athletes page that appears, scroll to the bottom and select the link [2017 Non-Athlete Membership Application](#).
  - Complete the form. Write a check for the registration amount per the instructions on the form.
  - Complete the annual [Officials Annual Release of Information](#) form
  - Electronically photocopy the two forms and send the PDFs to your Club Registrar for submission to MN Swim. Alternative: Mail the forms and a check to the MN Swimming address shown on the form.
- Stroke & Turn Officials must renew their Non-Athlete Membership and Information Release annually to maintain their certification. Some clubs will reimburse this cost, check with your Club Treasurer.

### E. Create an Online Account at [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)

Create a USA Swimming account:

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site ([www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)) home page.
- In the very upper right hand corner, click on "SIGN IN"
- In SIGN IN page that appears, select "SIGN UP" on the right side. Keep a record of your ID/password.
- In the REGISTER page that appears, enter the information. For the "USA Swimming Connection" field select "USA Swimming Member".
- If you already have a USA Swimming membership, select "Link My Account To USA Swimming Membership" field. Otherwise, do not select it. If you get your Swimming Account number later, you can link it at that time by logging into your USA Swimming online account.

## F. Stroke & Turn Online Exam

Note that you must create a USA Swimming online account before you can take the online Stroke & Turn exam. If you have not done this, go to the previous step. If you do have an online account:

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site ([www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)) home page.
- Select the SIGN IN link in the upper right of the home page and sign in with your USA Swimming ID and password.
- From the menu bar select FOR YOU > OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS page in the options toward the bottom, select OFFICIALS ONLINE TESTING.
- Take the Stroke & Turn Certification (not Re-Certification) test. Follow the instructions beginning on the OFFICIALS ONLINE TESTING page.

The online test is completely *open book*. You can save the test, print it out, find the answers and then retrieve the test and enter the answers. Just start and go to the first question and then save the test.

Each question has two parts, both multiple choice. In the first part, you answer a question relative to stroke and turn. In the second part you identify where in the rule book you found the answer (see next section for accessing the rule book.)

Every two years you will need to take the “Re-Certification” exam to stay current. Or you take the exam for the next level up (e.g. Starter) and that also qualifies.

### Access the USA Swimming Rulebook

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site ([www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)) home page.
- From the menu bar select FOR YOU > OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS page in the OFFICIALS QUICK LINKS section, select the link [Rules and Regulations](#).
- On the RULES & REGULATIONS page scroll down and select either the “2017 USA Swimming Rulebook” or “2017 USA Swimming Mini-Rulebook”.

The book is quite long, however the rules you need to know are just a few pages *so don't print the whole book!* Once your Minnesota Swimming membership is processed, you will receive a paperback copy of the current USA Swimming Rule Book.

## G. Athlete Protection Training

The Athlete Protection Training describes actions to take to make sure that swimmers have a safe environment from the perspective of abusive behavior. It requires about 45 minutes to complete.

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site ([www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)) home page.
- Select the SIGN IN link in the upper right of the home page and sign in with your USA Swimming ID and password.
- From the menu bar select FOR YOU > OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS page in the OFFICIALS QUICK LINKS section, select the link [Athlete Protection Training](#).
- Follow the instructions on the ATHLETE PROTECTION TRAINING.

Stroke & Turn officials must take the Athlete Protection Training every three years to maintain certification.

## H. Concussion Awareness Training

The concussion awareness training helps you to recognize the symptoms of a concussion and how to deal with situations when a swimmer gets a concussion. The **requirement for this training is a Minnesota state requirement**. There is no tracking. To access the concussion awareness training:

- Go to the Minnesota Swimming Web site ([www.mnswim.org](http://www.mnswim.org)) home page.
- From the menu bar select Documents/Resources > Coaches | Non-Athletes
- On the Documents: Coaches | Non-Athletes page that appears, scroll a short way down the page and select [Concussion Awareness Training for Coaches and Officials](#).
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention page for concussion training appears. Follow the instructions. MN State law requires retaking the training every three years.

## I. Level 2 Background Check

All Stroke and Turn officials must have a background check through the agency that USA Swimming enlists to perform background checks. To initiate a USA Swimming Level 2 background check:

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site ([www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)) home page.
- Select the SIGN IN link in the upper right of the home page and sign in with your USA Swimming ID and password.
- From the menu bar select FOR YOU > OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS page in the OFFICIALS QUICK LINKS section, select the link [Background Check](#).
- On the DOMESTIC BACKGROUND CHECKING PROGRAM page scroll down and select the link [Click here to initiate a new member background check](#).
- Continue according to the instructions.

Stroke & Turn officials must obtain a new background check every two years to maintain certification. Some clubs will reimburse this cost, check with your Club President or Treasurer.

## J. Complete Five Shadow Sessions

Typically, you need to complete five shadow sessions before formal certification.

- Arrive at the meet at approximately when warm-ups start. Tell the meet referee that you want to shadow for the session or sessions.
- At the Officials meeting, be sure to sign the Officials' Log sheet for the meet. Shadow Code = "XJ"
- Let the Meet Referee know how many shadow sessions you have already done. Using the Stroke & Turn Apprentice Form, request to shadow on the suggested activities.
- Keep track of your shadow sessions on the Stroke & Turn Apprenticeship Form. Ask the Referee to sign the form for each session.
- If possible, try to shadow at both 10 & Under sessions and 11 & Over sessions. Each offers a different perspective and the types of calls.

The five shadow sessions is not an absolute, sometimes it's only four, sometimes six or more. The key is for you to become comfortable in the process.

## K. Order a Name Badge

To identify yourself, order a Name Badge to wear while on the pool deck when officiating. A name badge with magnet clasp is typically easier on the new tech fabrics than the traditional pin-on badge. Go to [www.mnswim.org](http://www.mnswim.org) "Hosting Meets" > "Officials" page and look for [How to buy Name Badges and Shirts](#) Unless you prefer a pin-on type, be sure to ask for a magnetic clasp. Some clubs will reimburse the badge cost, check with your Club President or Treasurer.

## L. Completing Certification

When you have completed all of the above steps, e-mail pictures of your form to the Minnesota Officials Chair, Marcus Stromberg ( [mastromb@charter.net](mailto:mastromb@charter.net) ) to let him know that you have completed all steps. Once he verifies your certification, proceed to step M.

## M. Download your Deck Pass and Get Out on Deck!

USA Swimming suggests that you work at six session per year to maintain certification. You are welcome to officiate at any local Minnesota meet, not just your own club's meets. Just check in with the Referee when you arrive. Most Officials Meetings start 45 to 60 minutes before the session start – look for the Hospitality room.

At the Officials Meeting before the meet, the Referee may request to view your Deck Pass app 'Member Card' or a printed version of the card. The online Deck Pass version does not currently include your certification level, so it's recommended you download both the Deck Pass mobile app *and* print your card.

- A. Download the Deck Pass app:** USA Swimming's [Deck Pass Mobile](#) app can display your current Officials Membership Card so that you don't need to have a printed card.
- To download the app, search for "Deck Pass" in your smartphone's app store. Note there is also a "Deck Pass Plus" app available for \$1.99, but the free "Deck Pass" basic version works just fine.

- Once downloaded, sign in and your certification status is available under the “Member Card” icon.
- Once the previous step (Step L) is completed, the ‘Member Card’ should show valid ‘Expiration Date’, ‘Background Check’, and ‘Athlete Protection Training’ dates. If not, and you think you completed the step, please contact Marcus Stromberg ([mastromb@charter.net](mailto:mastromb@charter.net)) for assistance.

**B. Print a Paper Copy:** To print a paper copy of the Membership Card from the USA Swimming website:

- Go to [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)
- Sign in by clicking the “Sign In” link near the upper right of the screen.
- Enter you Username and password (this is your USA Swimming online account used to take the online test). Click the “Sign In” button.
- The text “<Your first name> Deck Pass” will appear in the upper menu bar at the top of the browser window. Click this link and sign-in.
- Your ‘Dashboard’ will appear on the screen. Scroll down a bit and on the left side of the screen there will be a “Current Status” pane including your certification status (when you passed the tests, etc.). At the bottom of the pane is “Membership Card >” -- click this link.
- Your Membership Card PDF will appear. Print this on a printer (doesn’t need to be color printed.) Verify your current certification, background check, and the Athlete Protection Training.