

STROKE & TURN APPRENTICESHIP FORM

ADDITIONAL DETAILS ON STEPS TO BECOMING A STROKE & TURN OFFICIAL

The following is additional information on the steps to become a USA Swimming Stroke & Turn Official that are on the Apprentice form. The order in which you execute the steps can vary, but this provides a general guideline.

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 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

Stroke & Turn Training Videos

USA Swimming provides good online video clips for judging the strokes. To view or download:

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site (www.usaswimming.org) home page.
- From the menu bar select OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS tab in the options toward the right side, select HOW TO BECOME AN OFFICIAL.
- On the [HOW TO BECOME AN OFFICIAL page](#), select the video that you want to review. Watch the Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly, Freestyle, Individual Medley, and Relay Start videos.

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.)

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) 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 [Non-Athlete Membership Application](#).
- Complete the form.
- If your club IS NOT paying for your registration, write a check for the registration amount per the instructions on the form. Mail the two completed forms and a check to the MN Swimming address shown on the form.

Stroke & Turn Officials must renew their Non-Athlete Membership annually to maintain their certification. Some clubs will reimburse this cost, check with your Club President or Treasurer.

Create an Online Account at www.usaswimming.org

Create a USA Swimming account:

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site (www.usaswimming.org) home page.
- In the very upper right hand corner, click on "LOG IN/REGISTER"
- In SIGN IN page that appears, select "REGISTER" 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.

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) 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 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

Access the current USA Swimming Rulebook:

- Go to the USA Swimming Web site (www.usaswimming.org) home page.
- From the menu bar select OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS page in the POPULAR RESOURCES section, select the link [Rules and Regulations](#).
- On the RULES & REGULATIONS page scroll down and select either the “USA Swimming 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.

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) 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 OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS page in the GETTING STARTED section, select the link [How to Become an Official](#).
- On the Getting Started page, under Basic Steps, select [Complete Athlete Protection Training](#).
- Follow the instructions on the ATHLETE PROTECTION TRAINING.

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

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) 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.
- Certificate of completion MUST be emailed to Becky (bvonderharr@mnswim.org) or Tracy (tmeece@mnswim.org)

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) 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 OFFICIALS
- On the OFFICIALS page in the How to Become an Official section
- Select the link [Complete Level 2 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.

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 = "XS"
- 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 12 & Under sessions and 13 & 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.

Print Deck Pass and order a Name Tag

To identify yourself on deck, after completing the online exam, APT, and Concussion training:

- Print your USA Swimming Member Card. To do this, log into your USA Swimming account and then click on your Deck Pass on the top left of the screen. From the 'Dashboard' page, click the "Membership Card >" link on the left side. Wear this as a Deck Pass while on deck.
- Order a Name Badge to wear while on the pool deck when officiating. The type with the magnet is typically easier on the new fabrics than the traditional pin-on badge. Go to www.mnswim.org "Hosting Meets" > "Officials" page and look for [Name Badges/Bell/Whistle Information](#). Some clubs will reimburse the badge cost, check with your Club President or Treasurer.

Completing Certification

When you have completed all of the above steps, e-mail pictures of your form to the Minnesota Officials Chair, Jack Swanson (JSwanson1519@gmail.com) AND (mnswimofficialschair@gmail.com) to let him know that you have completed all steps.

Get Out on Deck!

USA Swimming requires 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.

*Note that National meets hosted locally (e.g. Speedo), require 'N2' certification and a year of experience, but other than that, any local meet will welcome your assistance on deck!