



Certification Standards for Ozark Swimming Officials

Effective September 1, 2022

USA Swimming Officials Mission Statement

“To develop and conduct mentoring programs to recruit, educate, train and certify USA Swimming officials to provide high quality and consistent officiating for our athletes and ensure a clear and consistent knowledge of the rules, to provide sufficient time in training to assure familiarity with all levels of competition, to provide opportunity to work on the deck and advance through the certification process, to allow automatic acceptance at the Stoke and Turn level between all LSCs meeting the USA Swimming Minimum Standards Guidelines, and to ensure professionalism in all aspects of the word “team” while in attendance at a swim event both on and off the deck.”

Based upon guidelines from USA Swimming, these are the standards for Ozark Swimming Officials certification, advancement and re-certification.



Levels of Certification

There are seven levels of certification for swimming officials within the Ozark Swimming LSC:

1. Administrative Official
2. Stroke and Turn Judge
3. Chief Judge
4. Starter
5. Deck Referee
6. Administrative Referee
7. Meet Referee

(Please contact your Team Administrator for more information on reimbursement. Many teams will reimburse you for the expenses associated with becoming an official)

Progression of Levels

Progression to each successive level (if applicable) starting as a new Stroke and Turn Judge is summarized on the following pages. ***“Prerequisites” need to be in place prior to starting the apprenticeship at the next level.*** The steps necessary to maintain your certification at your current level are listed at the end of this document. **You are responsible for meeting the annual certification requirements.**

Expectations of Ozark Swimming Officials

- Know the rules
- Work meets regularly
- Call what you see -- don't guess or anticipate
- Be consistent in application of the rules
- Disregard the swimmer's age, identity, or club affiliation
- Use fair, unbiased judgment

Ozark Swimming Officials Uniform

Shirt: The shirt worn shall be plain white with a collar and long or short sleeves. Female officials may wear sleeveless collared shirts. Logos may appear on the shirt; however, the logo shall be restricted to the front of the shirt and the sleeve area. The logos may not contain or represent the following: alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, or suggestive/offensive messages. Ozark Swimming team names or logos are acceptable as long as they are small. A meet shirt provided by USA Swimming, Ozark Swimming, or an Ozark Swimming member team is acceptable.

Shorts/Pants/Capris/Skirts/Skorts: Shall be khaki in color. Cutoffs of any type are not allowed. Denim/Jeans material is not appropriate attire for officials on the deck.

Socks: Socks, if worn, should be plain white. Manufacturer's logos should be subdued.

Footwear: Athletic shoes are preferred. They should be as white as possible with little or no color; avoid to the extent possible bold and brightly colored logos and stripes. Crocs and sandals are not appropriate for officials on the deck.

Hats/Visors: Are permitted at meets and should be white or khaki.

Credentials: A valid USA Swimming ID card must be displayed at all times while on deck.



Prerequisites for New Officials/Apprentice Stroke and Turn Judge

Prerequisites must be completed prior to on-deck apprenticeship.

- **Be at least 18 years of age**
- **Attend a New Officials/Stroke and Turn Judge Clinic in the Ozark LSC**
Clinic fee (\$30) and USA Swimming fee (\$68) must be paid separately at the clinic via cash or checks made payable to Ozark Swimming.
- **Create an account on the USA Swimming website (www.usaswimming.org)** – Go to the USA Swimming website. Click “Sign In” at the top right of the page. Click on the “Create an Account” link. Write down your ID and password exactly; you will need it for future logons. This will provide you access to all of your information through Deck Pass.
- **Level 2 Background Check** – This is a requirement for anyone who will have credentialed access to the pool deck. The link for this can be found on the Officials Page at www.ozarkswimming.com. The initial fee is \$38.00 (paid online directly to IntelliCorp). A background check must be completed every two years; the renewal fee is \$18. Your background check will expire on the last day of the month, two years after it was awarded.
- **Complete the online Athlete Protection Course** – This is a requirement for anyone who will have credentialed access to the pool deck. The link for this can be found on the Official’s Page at www.ozarkswimming.com. Every official is required to complete the online Athlete Protection Course (or Refresher) every year to keep current. This is a free course.
- **Complete an online Concussion Protocol Training Course** – This is a one-time requirement for anyone who will have credentialed access to the pool deck. There are links to two acceptable sources for this training on the Official’s Page at www.ozarkswimming.com. This is a free course.

You must complete your Background check, Athlete Protection Training, and Concussion Protocol Training to receive your USA Swimming member ID. Please allow 7 business days for your Membership card to appear on your Deck Pass once you’ve completed these requirements.

Access to the pool deck will be denied to anyone who does not have a current USA Swimming Non-Athlete ID.

- **Link your USA Swimming Member ID to your USA Swimming Account** – Once your Membership card appears on your Deck Pass, please print out your Member ID and Certification Card.
- **Pass the following open-book, online test: “Certification – Stroke and Turn/Timer”** – Once you’ve signed in to the USA Swimming website, select “Member Resources,” then “Officials,” then “Testing and Certification.” Read all the test instructions carefully. You should print out the test and save it online so you can return to the same test. After completing all the answers on the printed pages, return online and finish the test you started and saved.
 - **80% is passing. You can re-take the test if you do not achieve this score.**
 - **The test must be completed within 21 days of attending the clinic.**



Apprenticing on Deck at Ozark Swimming Sanctioned Meets

- **Minimum** of 4 sessions, at a minimum of 2 Ozark Swimming sanctioned swim meets; with at least 2 different Ozark Swimming certified officials as your mentor and two different Meet Referees.
 - 3 sessions must be during competition where the majority of athletes are 12 & under
 - 1 session may be during 13 & over swimmer competition
- *Each session 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.*
- After each meet, have the mentoring official and Meet Referee sign your apprentice form. Your apprentice form will be emailed to you once you have received your membership card and completed your test. *Apprentices must contact the Ozark Officials Coordinator (listed in the email) and request to work as an apprentice prior to any Ozark Swimming meet(s) that they want to attend. Be sure to include the Meet Referee in your response to the Ozark Officials Coordinator.*

On-Deck Observation

Upon completion of apprentice sessions, submit (scan and email) your completed “Apprentice Form” to the Ozark Officials Coordinator and schedule your observation. You will serve for an entire session as an independent Stroke and Turn Judge. During this session, you will make your own calls (to include using the radio), write your own disqualification slips, and ensure the disqualification slips get to the Deck Referee.

- *Observations are held during sessions where the majority of athletes are 12 & under*

All apprentice sessions and observations must be completed at non-championship format meets and meets/sessions without time standards. These meets must be Ozark/USA Swimming sanctioned meets. Intra-squad and Dual meets lasting under 2.5 hours (actual run time) will not be counted toward apprentice sessions.

The entire certification process must be completed within 4 months from the date of the clinic the candidate attends, or they must restart the process.

After You Have Passed Your Observation

- **Print out your Qualified Official card** – After you have completed all of the steps above, you will receive an email stating that you are a “certified Stroke and Turn Judge.” Print your card and carry it along with your USA Swimming ID to show that you are a certified official with Ozark Swimming. **You must have your USA Swimming ID with you at all times when on deck!**
- **Work on-deck as a certified official** – Work a minimum of 6 sessions as a certified Stroke and Turn Judge at Ozark/USA Swimming sanctioned meets. This must be completed by August 31 following your clinic. **Apprentice sessions do not count towards the 6 sessions.**
- **Work at least 1 session at an Ozark Swimming Championship meet as a certified official.**
 - A Champs – late November
 - Division I Champs – late February
 - Long Course Champs – late July

Maintaining Your Certification

Please review the Recertification requirements on the last page of this document.



Advancement to Chief Judge

Prerequisites

- Must be at least 18 years old
- Must be current member of USA Swimming with no lapse in certification (non-athlete or athlete)
- Completion of 1 season served as a USA Swimming Stroke and Turn Judge
- Minimum of 12 sessions as a Stroke and Turn Judge at Ozark Swimming meets in the previous season, and with the recommendation/assignment by a Deck Referee
 - 4 of these sessions must have been at Ozark/USA Swimming sanctioned meets hosted by teams other than your own
 - 2 of these sessions must have been at LSC Championship meets

Apprentice on Deck at Ozark Swimming Sanctioned Meets

Minimum of 2 sessions at Ozark Swimming sanctioned meets while working with at least 2 different Deck Referees

- At least 1 session must be during competitions where the majority of athletes are 12 and under

Observation

After completing your apprentice sessions, submit (scan and email) your completed apprentice form to the Ozark Officials Coordinator and schedule your observation as a Chief Judge.

- Observations are held during competitions where the majority of athletes are 12 and under

All apprentice sessions and observations must be completed at non-championship format meets and meets/sessions without time standards. These meets must be Ozark/USA Swimming sanction meets. Intra-squad and Dual meets lasting under 2.5 hours (actual run time) will not be counted toward apprentice sessions.

This process must be completed within 4 months from the date your apprenticeship began or you must restart the process.

Maintaining your certification

Please review the Recertification requirements on the last page of this document.



Advancement to Starter

Prerequisites

- Must be at least 18 years old
- Must be a current member of USA Swimming with no lapse in certification (non-athlete or athlete)
- Completion of 1 season served as a USA Swimming Stroke and Turn Judge
- Minimum of 16 sessions as a Stroke and Turn Judge at Ozark Swimming meets in the previous season
 - 4 of these sessions must have been at Ozark/USA Swimming sanctioned meets hosted by teams other than your own
 - 2 of these sessions must have been at LSC Championship meets
- Notify the Officials Committee in writing of your desire to advance to Starter
- Receive written recommendation from the Officials Committee that the candidate is ready to advance to Starter

Advancing to Starter

- Attend an Ozark Swimming Starter clinic
- Must pass the online Starter exams within 30 days of attending the clinic with a minimum grade of 80%

Apprentice on Deck at Ozark Swimming Sanctioned Meets

- Minimum of 5 sessions during at least 3 Ozark Swimming sanctioned meets as Starter with at least 2 different Deck Referees
 - At least 4 sessions must be during competitions where the majority of athletes are 12 & under
- Receive written recommendations from 2 Meet/Deck Referees that you have worked with, confirming your readiness for certification as a Starter.

Observation

Upon completion of apprentice sessions, submit (scan and email) your completed “Apprentice Form” to the Ozark Officials Coordinator and schedule your observation as a Starter.

- Observations are held during sessions where the majority of athletes are 12 & under

All apprentice sessions and observations must be completed at non-championship format meets and meets/sessions without time standards. These meets must be Ozark/USA Swimming sanctioned meets. Intra-squad and Dual meets will not count towards apprentice sessions.

This process must be completed within 6 months from the date of the clinic the candidate attends or they must restart the process.

Maintaining Your Certification

Please review the Recertification requirements on the last page of this document.



Certifying As an Administrative Official

Prerequisites

- Be at least 18 years old
- Become a non-athlete member of USA Swimming or be a current member with no lapse in certification
- Attend the Administrative Officials Clinic
- Submit a Level 2 Background Check for Coaches & Officials
- Complete the Athlete Protection Course
- Complete the Concussion Protocol Training
- Take and pass online tests
 - Administrative Official
 - Must receive a minimum grade of 80% for 2-year certification

Apprentice at Ozark Swimming Sanctioned Meets

For new Administrative Officials

- Apprentice for at least 4 sessions at Ozark/USA Swimming sanctioned meets
 - At least one session must be as a Timing Judge, at least one session must be as the operator of the Meet Manager software, and at least 1 session must be as the Timing Console Operator—these sessions must be deemed a success by the Meet Referee

For current Team administrators and Referee level “Wet-Side” Officials — apprentice sessions may be waived based on experience and demonstrated performance.

Evaluation

Receive written recommendation from an Administrative Official Evaluator (for new Administrative Officials only)

Maintaining your certification

Please review the Recertification requirements on the last page of this document.



Advancement to Deck Referee

Prerequisites

- Be at least 21 years old
- Be a current member of USA Swimming with no lapse in certification (non-athlete or athlete).
- Minimum of 1 year served in the position of USA Swimming Starter, *after certification*
- Work a minimum of 16 sessions at Ozark Swimming sanctioned meets within one year, *after Starter certification, or during one swim year, whichever is applicable. A swim year runs from 1 Sep through 31 Aug*
 - 8 sessions must be as a certified Starter
 - 2 sessions must be at LSC Championship meets as a Starter
 - 6 sessions must be at meets hosted by an Ozark Swimming team other than your home team
- Serve as an on-deck Stroke and Turn Judge mentor
- Notify the Officials Committee in writing of your desire to become a Deck Referee
- Receive written recommendation from the Officials Committee that the candidate is ready to advance to Deck Referee

Advancing to Deck Referee (Must be completed in this order)

- Attend an Ozark Swimming Referee clinic
- Take and pass the applicable online exams within 45 days of attending the clinic
- **The Referee exams include the following:**
 - Starter Recertification, Timing Judge, Clerk of Course, Administrative, and Referee
 - Minimum grade of 90% for 3-year certification, 80% for 2-year certification

Apprentice on Deck at Ozark Swimming Sanctioned Meets

Serve as a Deck Referee apprentice for a minimum of 10 sessions during at least 3 Ozark Swimming sanctioned meets under at least 2 different Meet Referees within 12 months of attending the clinic

- All apprentice sessions must be served at Ozark Swimming sanctioned meets. At least 4 sessions must be during 12 and under swimmer competitions
- 2 or more of the apprentice sessions are to be worked as Timing Judge. Each session must be deemed successful by the Meet Referee
- Receive written recommendations from 2 Meet Referees that the apprentice is ready for certification as a Deck Referee

Observation

Upon completion of apprentice sessions, submit your completed “Apprentice Form” to the Officials Coordinator and schedule your observation as a Deck Referee.

- **Observations are held a 12 & under competition**

All apprentice sessions and observations must be completed at non-championship format meets and meet/sessions without time standards at Ozark Swimming sanctioned meets. Intra-squad and Dual meets will not count toward apprentice sessions and observations.

This process must be completed within 12 months from the date of the clinic the candidate attends or they must restart the process.

Maintaining Your Certification

Please review the Recertification requirements on the last page of this document.



Advancement to Administrative Referee

Prerequisites

- Be a current member of USA Swimming with no lapse in certification (non-athlete or athlete)
- Be certified as a Deck Referee
- Notify the Officials Committee in writing of your desire to become an Administrative Referee
- Receive written recommendation from the Officials Committee that the candidate is ready to advance to Administrative Referee

Advancing to Administrative Referee

- Must pass the following online tests within 45 days of being selected to advance
 - **Recertification test:** Referee, Timing Judge, Clerk of Course
 - **Certification test:** Administrative Referee

Apprentice at Ozark Swimming Sanctioned Meets

- Coordinate with the Ozark Officials Coordinator and the Ozark Officials Chair on which meet you would like to work as an apprentice
- Must be at an LSC Championship meet as part of the Administrative Referee team
- Receive written recommendations from mentoring Administrative Referee(s) that you are ready for certification

Evaluation

- Championship meet must be deemed a success by the lead Administrative Referee
- Mentoring Referee(s) will recommend apprentice for Advancement or additional apprentice sessions

This process must be completed within 12 months from the date of the Officials Committee approval for advancement.

Maintaining your certification

Please review the Recertification requirements on the last page of this document.



Advancement to Meet Referee

Prerequisites

- Be a current member of USA Swimming with no lapse in certification (non-athlete or athlete)
- Minimum of 1 year served in the position of Deck Referee, after certification
- Work at least 2 LSC Championship meets as a Deck or Administrative Referee
- Notify the Officials Committee in writing of your desire to become a Meet Referee
- Receive written recommendation from the Officials Committee that the candidate is ready to advance to Meet Referee
 - The Ozark Officials Coordinator and Ozark Officials Chair will assign a mentor Meet Referee

Evaluation

- Work an entire B/C level meet as the Meet Referee of record at an Ozark Swimming sanctioned meet
 - This meet must be deemed a success by your mentor Meet Referee.

Maintaining your certification

Please review the Recertification requirements on the last page of this document.



Recertification – All Ozark Swimming Officials

Each Season (September 1 – 31 August)

- Be a current member of USA Swimming (non-athlete or athlete) without any lapse
- Work a minimum of 6 sessions as a certified official at Ozark/USA Swimming sanctioned meets *
- Work at least 1 session as a certified official at an Ozark Swimming Championship meet
 - A Champs—late November
 - Division I Champs—late February
 - Long Course Champs—late July

***Note: Apprentice sessions do not apply towards this requirement**

Every 2 years

- Must attend appropriate Ozark Swimming Recertification Clinic for your current certification level (unless approved for advancement)
- Be a member of USA Swimming without any lapse of membership
- Must pass the appropriate online examinations within 21 days for Stroke and Turn Judge and Starter; within 30 days for other positions after attending the appropriate recertification clinic. There are recertification test(s) appropriate for each level.
 - A score of 80% or better on all tests taken is required
 - All Referees must score 90% to achieve a 3-year certification; otherwise bi-annual recertification is required

Recertification Tests

- **Stroke and Turn Judge and Chief Judge:** Recertification Stroke and Turn/Timer
- **Starter:** Recertification Starter
- **Administrative Official:** Recertification Administrative Official
- **Deck Referee:** Recertification Referee, Timing Judge, Clerk of Course
- **Admin Referee:** Recertification Referee, Timing Judge, Clerk of Course
- **Meet Referee:** Recertification Referee, Administrative, Timing Judge, Clerk of Course

Other Requirements

- Level 2 background check must be renewed every 2 years (on the month it was conducted)
- Retake the Athlete Protection Course or Refresher (every year)
 - Links to these websites are on the Officials Page on www.ozarkswimming.com

Recertification or advancement may be denied based on consideration of the Officials Committee



Ozark Swimming Officials Committee

Jeff McCoskey – Officials Committee Chair

Bruce Dreyer

Steve Grimm

Jeff Heveroh

Mark Imig – Coaches Representative

TBD – Athlete Representative

Brian Perkins

Stephanie Petersen

Bill Rener – Officials Coordinator

Kim Weiss

TBD

TBD