***Becoming a USA Swimming Certified***

***Starter and/or Referee***

***Wisconsin Swimming, Inc***

There are two levels of certification for Officials within Wisconsin Swimming: Stroke and Turn, and Starter/Referee. Wisconsin Swimming requires dual certification as a Starter and Referee, and independent certification as a Starter or Referee is not allowed. The rational for this requirement is to ensure that there are at least two individuals at every meet that can serve as either a Starter or Referee (not just two Starters or two Referees).

After serving 10 months as a certified Stroke and Turn Judge and having completed ten sessions as a Stroke and Turn Judge, officials may begin the process of advancement to USA Swimming certification at the Starter/Referee level.

***Prerequisites***

1. Current USA Swimming Non-Athlete membership.
2. Completion of ten sessions as a certified Stroke and Turn Official.
3. Completion of one year as a certified Stroke and Turn Official.
4. Prior completion of Criminal Background Check
5. Prior completion of the USA Swimming online Athlete Protection education module.
6. Concussion Protocol Training - For USA Swimming membership, officials must successfully complete concussion and head injury education at least once. Submit your proof of training to your LSC registrar in order for it to show on your deck pass. FAQ's about this requirement can be found [HERE](https://www.usaswimming.org/news-landing-page/2019/08/27/coaching-education-requirement-changes-faq).  Here are the links to popular courses *-*[CDC Course](https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/training/index.html), [NFHS Course](https://nfhslearn.com/courses/61129/concussion-in-sports)

***Requirements for Starter Certification***

**1. Take a Training Clinic**

* Attend a “Starter Training Clinic.” The Wisconsin Swimming Officials Committee conducts Clinics periodically in various locations. Clinics may occur in a classroom setting only, with a classroom setting and in conjunction with a sanctioned swim meet or online.
* Clinic announcements are located on the Officials page of the Wisconsin Swimming website.
* The Clinic consists of:
* Appr. 2 hour education session.
* Discussions of Starter, Starter Protocols, Starter Philosophy and False Start Scenarios
* Viewing and discussion of the USA Swimming-produced DVD “The Start- Philosophy and Protocol”
1. **Take the USA Swimming Online Tests:** The starter tests may be started as soon as the Training Clinic has been completed. **The test must be completed prior to the 2nd starter apprentice sessions.**
2. **Fulfill On-Deck Apprentice Session Requirements:**
* Serve 5 sessions on deck at a minimum of two different meets with at least two different mentors. At least one apprentice session for starters has to include a session with distance events (500 yards, 800 m, 1000 y, 1500 m, and/or 1650 y
* Contact the Meet Referee or Meet Director prior to the Meet for permission to attend as an Apprentice and to ensure one-on-one mentoring.
* Attend the Pre-Meet Officials Briefing, 45-60 minutes prior to the start of the meet session (or at the time determined by the Meet Referee).
* In order for sessions to count:
* Session needs to be at least 2 hours long
* 1 apprentice per session per position
1. **Yearly session requirements:**

Every year, a minimum of 6 sessions, with a minimum of 4 of those as starter.

***Requirements for Referee Certification***

1. **Take a Training Clinic**
* Attend a “Referee Training Clinic.” The Wisconsin Swimming Officials Committee conducts Clinics periodically in various locations. Clinics may occur in a classroom setting only, with a classroom setting and in conjunction with a sanctioned swim meet or online.
* Clinic announcements are located on the Officials page of the Wisconsin Swimming website.
* The Clinic consists of:
* Appr. 2 hour education session.
* Discussions of Chief Judge position, Referee Protocol, Meet Referee duties
1. **. Take the USA Swimming Online Tests:** The tests may be started as soon as the Training Clinic has been completed. **All tests must be completed prior to the 2nd referee apprentice sessions.**
	* + 1. Referee
			2. Administrative Referee
			3. Timing Judge
			4. Clerk of Course
			5. Stroke and Turn/Timer

All tests must be passed with a grade of at least 80 % within the past 24 months. If S/T judge moves to Referee within 24 months, Stroke and Turn/Timer test does not need to be repeated, same holds true if moving from starter to referee within 24 months, no repeat of starter test needed.

**3.** **Fulfill On-Deck Apprentice Session Requirements**

* Serving as an Apprentice on-deck for 6 sessions as referee at three or more different meets.
* Contact the Meet Referee or Meet Director prior to the Meet for permission to attend as an Apprentice and to ensure one-on-one mentoring.
* Attend the Pre-Meet Officials Briefing, 45-60 minutes prior to the start of the meet session (or at the time determined by the Meet Referee).
* In order for sessions to count:
	+ Session needs to be at least 2 hours long.
	+ 1 apprentice per session per position.

**4. Yearly session requirements:**

* + - For Referee only: Minimum of 6 sessions as referee, administrative referee and/or meet referee per calendar year.
		- If Starter AND Referee certified: Minimum of 8 sessions, of those 6 session as starter or higher, with at least 2 as starter and 2 as referee, administrative referee and/or meet referee per year.

***Requirements for BOTH positions:***

**1. Other Requirements**

* Minimum age of 21 years
* Attire: Solid navy blue skirt, shorts or pants, white collared polo shirt and white athletic shoes
* Attitude: Positive attitude, willingness to volunteer, and dedication

**2. Certification**

* Achieved after successful completion of the Training Clinic, USA Swimming on-line tests, and the Apprentice sessions.
* Submit the completed and signed apprentice card to Jacqueline Jugenheimer, Officials Chair, 459 Presidential Lane, Madison, WI 53711, or via email: officialschair@wisconsinswimming.org (photo or scanned copy)
* Wisconsin LSC Certified officials will use their current year USA Swimming Membership Cards as their primary credentials to verify they may be permitted on deck for USA Swimming Sanctioned, Approved, or Observed meets or events.
* Wisconsin LSC officials will use a copy of their OTS generated USA Swimming Official Certification Card as a supplement to their USA Swimming Membership Card as a means of verification of their LSC and National official certification levels needed for serving in assigned positions. These Official Certification Cards also show the expiration dates of the official’s USA Swimming registration, Criminal Background Check, Athlete Protection Training, and completed concussion training requirement.

***After Certification as a Starter and/or Referee***

1. **On Deck**
* Attend the Pre-Meet Officials Briefing, usually starting 45-60 minutes prior to the beginning of each meet session or at the discretion of the Meet Referee
* Accept deck assignment from the Meet Referee or his/her designee
* Encouraged to volunteer at any meet attended
1. **Maintenance of Certification**
* Recertification required every odd-numbered year, therefore the Officials’ Committee offers recertification activities every even-numbered year.
* Options for Recertification in each even numbered year: attend a Wisconsin Swimming Recertification Clinic, take the USA Swimming on-line Recertification Tests, successful evaluation at the N2 or N3 level at any OQM meet, or completion of 75% of the sessions of a National Qualifying Meet without evaluation in that calendar year, at the level of a Zone, Speedo or above meet.
* Must meet annual session requirements.
* Must complete the Criminal Background Check every 2 years, the online Athlete Protection Training module annually, and must have completed Concussion Training once.
1. **National Certification**
	* 1. N1-LSC Certification: May officiate at any LSC level meet in any USA Swimming LSC
		2. N2- National Certification: recognizes that an official is experienced and has been evaluated as capable of working the position at Sectional, Zone, Grand Prix and similar higher profile meets. One evaluation required.
		3. N3- National Championship Certification: recognizes that an official has the experience, skills, and knowledge to be considered for selection to work National Championship level meets in the position certified. Two evaluations required for all position except Stroke and Turn, which requires one evaluation.

**Fees**

1. Starter/Referee Training Clinic Fee: Usually $25.
2. Clubs may reimburse participants for their Training Clinic fee.

**For More Information:**

Please contact:

* Jacqueline Jugenheimer, Wisconsin Swimming Officials’ Committee (officialschair@wisconsinswimming.org)

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