



Volunteering at a Swim Meet

How does it work?

Putting on a successful swim meet is a large undertaking, and happy, hard-working parent volunteers are the key to success. We need you! To get you ready, see the following questions and answers to learn how getting your hours works best for you, the coaches, and all of us!

If you have other questions about volunteering please email the board president. (email info is located under the "About Our Team" tab on the website)

Question: Why are some high-hour jobs pre-selected, and how can I get one of them?

There are certain positions that require expertise, experience, or both, and we often have trouble finding skilled volunteers for these key positions. Running the office computers or the timing consoles are very good examples of this. We pre-select these positions to ensure that when things get tricky, we have knowledgeable people on hand who can fix things quickly.

If you want to learn about these positions even though they are filled, just ask! We're happy to have you shadow someone, learn, and offer your expertise in future meets! Contact the meet director about shadowing. You can get hours for shadowing, and then take on a leadership position in the future!

See the "Which jobs are pre-selected and why" question (below) for details on which jobs are pre-selected.

Question: I need hours and can't find them so what can I do?

We've done the math, and believe it or not there are more hours available than there are families to fill them (including the years when we host 3 meets). Most years we are unable to fill grounds-keeping duties, announcer positions, and timing console positions, among others. If you can't find what you're looking for, check back regularly on the site because people change their plans and often "un-sign-up" for various slots. If you have questions, call the meet director.

Question: Why don't hours spent at other activities count?

This is a touchy one. The bottom line though is that swim meets are the bread and butter of the team. If we don't run it well, people don't come back and we may lose the meet. This makes the meets the most important place to put your volunteer hours to work. In the past, we only counted hours spent at our hosted meets. We now offer other alternatives but it does jeopardize our meets when folks fulfill requirements at other clubs' meets, etc. and "skip" the swim meets. Please keep that in mind when getting your hours in. We can't survive as a team without successful meets. We have a great reputation and we want to keep it that way!

Question: I have plenty of hours but still want to help, especially those unfilled positions that go empty, what can I do?

If you are at or close to your required hours, hold off on sign-ups for a week or so to give others a shot to fulfill their requirements. That way everyone gets a chance to get involved. Get in touch with the meet director anytime.

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Question: Which jobs are pre-selected and why?

In alphabetical order, these are the jobs where we need someone with know-how and past experience. See above if you don't have experience but want some!!

Announcer Lead. There's more to this than talking. There is a certain way of doing things, certain required procedures, and lots of things to remember. The Announcer Lead is there for the intense shifts, and then trains others who sign up for the open announcer positions. Sign up for an announcer slot and let the meet director or announcer lead know you are interested in learning the ropes.

Awards Lead. This position requires some experience when putting all the awards together before they are distributed. But more than that, there are many hours of work prior to the actual meet that count toward your dues offset. There's ordering high-point towels, all the event awards, and a whole lot of heat-winner awards. The awards lead takes care of all of that by getting started in January. Are you interested in this position? Call the meet director. If there's nobody in line, it could be you next year.

Grounds Operations – Bathroom Lead (Men and Women). This job is not a glory job, let's be straight about it, and in the beginning it was not a pre-select slot. Those were the days we got many complaints about our bathroom care. We found hard working men and women who take this job seriously and keep the bathrooms spotless. This includes the bathrooms in the park that we're not supposed to worry about...yeah right. Our people do those too. The utmost respect is given to those we find willing to do it. We will continue to pre-select this. Let the meet director know if you're one of the honored few.

Head Timers and Head Timer Apprentices (East and West). Using stop watches for timing races is pretty straight forward; being in charge of it all requires experience and fast thinking, especially during the 50 Meter events and all the "double-ended" starts. We pre-select these lead positions to make sure transition from heat to heat and event to event is smooth. It's very noticeable when it isn't smooth. The apprentice positions are for people who intend to become lead in the future. Call the meet director if you want to shadow these positions.

Hospitality Lead and Key Positions. This is a big job all around, and catering-like skills for several positions is a must. We pre-select these positions so that officials and coaches stay happy. We don't want them complaining or going hungry. If you want to get involved, call the meet director!

Information Desk. People at the "info desk" have to know enough about a lot! They manage the volunteer check-in/check-out process. They take questions from swimmers, parents, coaches, officials, and sometimes even vendors. You need people skills! We select some parents who've been around a while and like to help people on the spot. If this interests you, call the meet director!

Medical On-Call. So...this position gets you several hours and is likely not going to require anything of the volunteer. But if something big goes down, we have people in the medical field who know what to do. These folks step up in a crisis, assist life guards, and may save a life at some point. A big thanks goes to those who do this. If you are in the medical field and want to get involved, call the meet director.

Officials. These positions require formal training (easy, but formal) and shadowing is required. It's a great job so if you are interested, just approach someone in a white polo at the meet and tell them you want to get started. Or, as usual, you can contact the meet director.



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Office Lead and Key Positions. This is the most hectic and chaotic place to be during a meet. If you can run a laptop, understand all the ins-and-outs of racing, can handle pressure when things break down, then you will be asked to work in this area. Let the meet director know if you have what it takes. These pre-selected folks are heroes.

Setup Assignment Desk. During setup time, these two slots require a good knowledge of where everything is stored, where everything goes, and some knowledge of how to do it. These folks hand out assignments, gather a crew when necessary, and keep everybody rolling on specific jobs. It makes setup much faster and much more efficient. This is a fun job, so if you want to shadow, call the meet director.

Setup/Teardown (Canopy Lead). An understanding of which canopies go where, the order in which to set them up and tear them down is critical. So many things depend on the canopies, so taking too long to get them up delays the entire process. When you have some understanding and you want to step up, let the meet director know.

Setup/Teardown (PA System Lead). It takes a few people to do this, and one of them needs some experience in where the speakers go, how to run the cables safely, and what plugs in to what. If you want to learn this setup job, consider shadowing, helping out, and call the meet director.

Setup/Teardown (Timing System Lead). It takes a few people to do this, and one of them needs experience. This is a complex process of running different kinds of cables, setting up electronics equipment, touch pads, and scoreboards. If you want to learn this setup job, consider shadowing, helping out, and call the meet director.

Setup/Teardown (Storage Unit Lead). This leader needs to know where the storage unit is, what's in it, how to transport it, and how to put everything back! And one huge requirement: you have a trailer that can handle everything we have! Many people pitch in by filling open slots, but the person in the know (and with the trailer) is pre-selected.

Timing Console Lead (East and West). This is the 2nd most hectic and chaotic place to be (see Office Lead above). You need to know how to run a console during a race, get printouts for each race, keep an eye on the swimmers and officials, and be ready to spring when something goes awry. There are plenty of open slots to learn, but the lead needs to be pre-selected.