

- Being aware of the number of swimmers appropriate for the number of lanes available and distances offered.
- Adequate meet staffing such that marshals, timers and other meet personnel are properly trained and in place.
- Keeping equipment (computers, timing systems, printers, etc.) in proper working order.

NEW ENGLAND SWIMMING FOUR HOUR RULE APPLICATION and PENALTIES

3. Four Hour Policy *(approved June, 2015,)*

Background - USA Swimming Rule 205.3.1F reads: “With the exception of championship meets the program in all other age group competition shall be planned to allow the events for swimmers 12 years and younger to be completed in four (4) hours or less for a timed finals session or “(4) hours for a preliminaries and (4) hours for finals in a trials/final meet.” *Jay Thomas, Rules & Regs Chair, USA Swimming*

a. **Application:** Meets Exempt from the “4-Hour Rule” are:

- i. End of Season Regionals/Qualifiers/Championship Meets
- ii. Distance meet where swimmers are notified of the time of their swim.
- iii. Sessions where all of the athletes participating are 13 and Older.
No meet session in New England Swimming may exceed 5 hours.

b. **Penalty for non-compliance** – Any Club holding a meet must run a projected timeline for that session using a 30-second time interval (or 20-second if over/under starting procedure is used); the timeline should be run on the seeded session using the Hy-Tek Meet Manager software. If the projected timeline is over 4 hours, cut protocols must be made to reduce the timeline to the acceptable 4 hours.

Any session that exceeds four or five hours is subject to the following fines or penalties unless the session is actually conducted in less than four or five hours as certified on the Post- meet report submitted to NES:

- i.** Loss of Meet Deposit
 - ii.** 1000.00 fine per session.
 - iii.** loss of Sanction by the Club for a subsequent meet, or loss of the right to bid on subsequent meets.
 - iv.** Loss of distance subsidy if infraction was during the distance session.

The above fines and penalties will be imposed at the discretion of the Administrative Vice Chair subject to review by the Admin Review Board or the NES Board of Directors.

c. Procedure to use to avoid exceeding 4 hours:

- a. A meet host should consider the following possible format modifications in order to avoid exceeding the 4-hour session limit. In all cases, notification of such possible changes should be included in the cut protocol of the Meet Information. All changes to the meet format are subject to review by NES Technical Planning Chair:
 - i. Split the session into separate sessions for each age-group.
 - ii. Create a separate session for distance events 400 yards/meters or longer.
 - iii. Accept no further entries when the 4 hour time limit is reached. If you exceed the 4 hours before all your 75% is entered, you start with cut protocols before the meet begins.
- c. Whatever action is taken to reduce the time, all teams competing in that session must be notified of the change in format and be refunded if they cannot comply.