



How To Become (And Stay) An Official With USA Swimming and Maine Swimming

There have been a number of questions recently regarding the registration of new officials with Maine Swimming, along with others for renewing existing non-athlete members. This document should provide answers to the most common questions and provide step by step instructions for both new officials and returning officials.

The process for becoming a USA Swimming has four (4) separate components. One must:

- Attend a Stroke and Turn clinic;
- Register as a USA Swimming Non-Athlete Member through the Maine Swimming (MSI) website;
- Take an on-line test (test is located on the USA Swimming (USAS) website); and,
- Apprentice on deck.

While there are many varying arguments for the order in which one completes the four (4) requirements, the reality is there is no rule dictating which should be done first, second, third or fourth. Some say you should register first, attend a clinic, take the test and then apprentice. However, there is nothing that says you cannot apprentice a few sessions and see if this is something you would like to do. If so, then you can attend a clinic, pay the money and take the test. Regardless of the order, all are required and will be addressed in more detail below.

Attend A Clinic

All individuals seeking to register as a non-athlete member with USA Swimming and become an official must attend a Stroke and Turn clinic. Clinics are offered periodically throughout the year. They are facilitated by a seasoned official and typically run two (2) to three (3) hours. There is no fee for attending any Maine Swimming training clinics.

If you are interested in attending a clinic, contact the Official's Chair, Marie Weferling at wefers@gwi.net and look at the MSI website for posted upcoming clinics.

Be sure to check back often as clinics are added to the schedule throughout the year. If your team has a number of people interested in becoming an official then contact our Officials Chair, Marie Weferling, at wefers@gwi.net, and she will arrange a clinic for your team.

Returning officials must also periodically re-certify in their current position. Whether as Stroke and Turn, Starter or Referee, all current officials must attend a clinic once every three (3) years as part of the recertification process.

Register As A Non-Athlete Member With USA Swimming

All officials *must* be registered with USA Swimming in order to appear on deck and work a meet. While the registration process may appear a bit complicated, in reality it is quite simple. It is comprised of three (3) steps described in detail below.....

Step One – Register as a Non-Athlete on the Maine Swimming website

Simply go to the Maine Swimming website www.maineswimming.org . There you will see a button prominently displayed for the current year's registration forms.

You will then be re-directed to the registration page:

First click on the link for the officials. Then click on the link for the Registration Form. It is a fillable pdf and seeks basic information such as name, address and contact information.

It must be noted that all officials must register as a USA Swimming Non-Athlete Member each and every year with USA Swimming through the Maine Swimming Office. There are no exceptions and all registrations expire on December 31 of each calendar year. If you are registering for the first time, and it is after September 1st, you will receive a registration card for the next year and the balance of the current year will be included.

As a courtesy to the Maine Swimming Office all officials are asked to be aware of the time of year and the expiration of their certifications. Please be sure to submit your annual registration with ample time for the office to process your request. Do not place yourself in the difficult position of sending in the registration on the last couple days of the year and expect to be working on deck the first couple of weeks in January.

Step Two – Submit a Background Screen

In the continuing effort to protect our athletes, all non-athlete members, including officials, must successfully submit and pass a background check. The first time the fee is thirty-eight (\$38) dollars and it is good for two (2) years. Renewing your background check about nineteen (\$19) dollars. Please be aware these fees are subject to change depending on where you might have lived, former names, etc. To start the process simply click on the "Background Screening" link under the officials registration section located on the MSI website:"

Step Three – Complete the Athlete Protection Training

Again, all non-athlete members of USA Swimming, including officials, must complete an Athlete Protection Training as another component of protecting our athletes. The training consists of two on-line video courses and tests. It typically takes 45 minutes to an hour to complete and receive

notification of successful completion of the course is sent to the Maine Swimming Office. The training is very informative and the multiple choice test is easy once you have watched the video. Once you click the link under the official registration at the Maine Swimming website you will be re-directed to the following page on the USA Swimming site:

It is very important that all officials be aware of when not only their annual registration expires, but when their background screen and athlete protection training lapses. All the information is found on your Deck Pass. While all non-athlete registrations expire on December 31 of each year, background checks and athlete protection training lapse at different times. Simply login to Deck Pass, identify the dates the background check and athlete protection training lapse and plan accordingly. If you need to update your background check be sure to visit the appropriate page on the USA Swimming website.

Take The Test

If you are a new official you must take a multiple choice test on the USA Swimming website. Each question consists of two (2) parts. The first is either a multiple choice or true / false question. The second part is again multiple choice and provides the citation in the rule book for the correct answer. The test is open book and is specifically designed to have the takers go into the rule book with each question, thus encouraging them to become familiar with the rules and where to find them.

To start the process, go to the USA Swimming website at www.USASwimming.org and log in.

Once you have logged in, copy and paste this link in your browser

<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/officials/officials-online-testing>

The link will bring you to the testing page where you can select your test:

At this point you will be asked to select the test you wish to take. If you are a new official, take the certification test for Stroke and Turn / Timer. If you are re-certifying in any position click on the recertification test for the appropriate position.

When you select your test level USA Swimming generates a test with a certain number of randomly selected approved questions. You do not need to complete the test in one sitting or while on line. Many people simply print their test, log off, and then complete the responses in the coming days. When you log back in the site will return you to your test and questions. You can return as many times as you like, just remember to submit your test when completed. The results will be displayed immediately and let you if you passed. Remember to put in your LSC (ME for Maine Swimming) and the results will also be sent to our Officials Chair. This can be done if you “link” your account when it is created.

Remember, all the tests are open book and designed to encourage familiarity with the rule book. You will need a copy of the rule book to successfully complete the test. If you do not have a recent copy, the rules can be found on the USA Swimming website or at the link here:

<https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/governance-lsc/rules-regulations>

Apprentice on Deck

All new officials must apprentice on deck as part of the training process. You must apprentice at least four (4) sessions from at least two (2) meets. When you apprentice you will be on deck and work with another experienced official watching the swimmers and training in the implementation and application of the rules. When you arrive at the swim meet go onto deck and ask for the Meet Referee. Introduce yourself and let her or him know you are there to apprentice. As with any swim meet, you will be asked to sign in (on a form typically near the starter's podium or with meet management) so your service can be credited in OTS, the Officials Tracking System for USA Swimming. Remember, if after four (4) sessions you want more experience feel free to continue apprenticing until you feel you are ready.

Special Reminder Regarding Expirations

All officials are responsible for maintaining current certifications, whether it be their annual registration, background check, athlete protection training or recertification in their current positions. All this information can be found on Deck Pass. However, the most comprehensive source is to log into USA Swimming, go to the officials page, click the tab for the "[Officials Tracking System](#)". Here, you will see when you need to re-certify in your current position, along with the dates your background check, registration and athlete protection training all expire.

Remember, you are responsible for keeping all aspects of your non-athlete registration current.

In addition, you can also access the same information via the USA Swimming Deck Pass app on your smartphone. To find out more about Deck Pass go to: <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/create-a-deck-pass-account>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to email Marie Weferling at wefers@gwi.net