



# Maine Swimming, Inc. Meet Director Handbook

Last updated 10/30/2020

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## *Table of Contents*

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|                             |    |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Introduction                | 2  |
| Meet Director Certification | 2  |
| Meet Director               | 2  |
| Steps to a Swim Meet        | 3  |
| Meet Announcement           | 5  |
| Meet Personnel              | 7  |
| Meet Evaluation             | 10 |
| Glossary                    | 11 |

## **Introduction**

The Maine Swimming, Inc. (MESI) Meet Director Handbook has been designed as an organizational and operational aid for a Meet Director (MD) in Maine Swimming. This handbook contains numerous references to the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations as well as MESI Bylaws and Policy & Procedures. Citations of [USA-S Rules and Regulations](#) are based on the 2020 edition and may differ slightly in subsequent editions. Please remember that USA-S Rules and Regulations and the MESI Policies and Procedures Manual are your primary references. They, rather than this handbook, are the controlling documents.

The exact responsibilities of the Meet Director vary from club to club and by the type of meet. This manual has been written generically; therefore not all of its contents will apply to every meet.

Although swim meets are profitable for both the host club and Maine Swimming, remember, the overall mission of providing meets is to “create opportunities and provide resources to promote excellence in Maine swimming”.

## **Meet Director Certification**

All MESI Certified Meet Directors and those seeking certification must be non-athlete members of USA Swimming, and must successfully complete the USA Swimming Background Check (BGC) and the Athlete Protection Training (APT). Meet Directors are certified by Maine Swimming for three (3) years from completion of the certification requirements. The certification of Meet Directors is the responsibility of the Sanction Chair. A list of certified Meet Directors will be maintained by the MESI Office and will be posted on the MESI website.

### **Certification – New Meet Directors**

1. Review the online MESI Meet Director’s Handbook and become familiar with all sections, along with all related documents on the website.
2. Attend an MESI Meet Director Training.
3. Complete/pass the MESI Meet Director test online with a minimum of 80%.

### **Re-certification - Every Three Years**

1. Maintain non-athlete membership in USA Swimming with a current completion of the USA Swimming Background Check and Athlete Protection Training Programs.
2. Serve as a Meet Director for at least one (1) sanctioned meet during the previous three years.
3. Complete/pass the online MESI recertification test for Meet Directors with at least an 80%.
4. Attend an MESI Meet Director Training.

## **Meet Director Responsibilities**

### ***Main Responsibilities***

(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.9)

Few individuals contribute to the programs and success of competitive swim meets as much as the Meet Director. The Meet Director's primary goal should be to host a well-organized and efficiently run swim meet while providing the athletes with an excellent competitive environment. Swim meets are for swimmers and should be fun and character building. They should be designed with the swimmers' best interest in mind.

Meet Directors are responsible for organizing and conducting a meet that complies with the USA-S and MESI rules. They must ensure that the meet follows the technical and administrative rules described in *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations* and the *MESI Policies and Procedures Manual*; these documents should be available for reference before, during and after the meet.

The Meet Director's major responsibilities include:

- § Submitting a bid for the Annual Bid Meet usually in the spring in conjunction with House of Delegates.
- § Securing a facility and assuring that the pool and its environments meet the requirements in Article 103 of the *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations*.
- § Preparing the meet announcement.
- § Arranging for meet personnel.
- § Obtaining the meet sanction from MESI.
- § Ordering awards, when appropriate..
- § Sending the entry file to the MESI Office for registration reconciliation and review of the session timelines.
- § Printing the meet programs and/or heat sheets. (Note: Meet Mobile may be used in place of meet programs, when appropriate.)
- § Preparing and distributing the final meet results.
- § Filing the appropriate post-meet electronic or paper reports with MESI.
- § Submitting a Report of Occurrence for any accidents or injuries that occurred as part of the meet.

While the Meet Director is ultimately responsible for each of the tasks noted above, it is wise to enlist the aid of a team of volunteers to assist in many of these areas. Meet Directors should not assume any other responsibilities during the meet, although the MD may serve as the AO for the meet (if certified) if it will not interfere with their other responsibilities. The MD must be available to answer questions, resolve problems, and generally keep everything operating efficiently. The MD must keep a cool head, an open ear and a gracious smile, remembering that most participants at swim meets - swimmers, coaches, officials and spectators – are sincere.

## **Steps to A Swim Meet**

**Submit a Meet Bid (MESI P & P 600):** The Meet Director must declare their intention to bid to the Technical Planning Chair by the MESI bid form 7 days prior to the bid meeting and include the type of meet, location of the meet, a facility description, tentative event list and other information as determined

by the Technical Planning Committee. The Bid Meeting occurs in the spring in conjunction with the Annual House of Delegates.

Meets on the calendar approved at the Bid Meeting are open to all. A non-calendar meet is a sanctioned meet where the meet host did not submit the bid by the Bid Meeting deadline, or wants to run a virtual, dual, tri or invitational meet. Non-calendar meets are subject to a different fee structure than calendar meets.

**Secure a Facility:** The Meet Director should submit the facility request or application at least six months in advance and assure that the pool and its environments meet the requirements in Article 103 of the *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations*. Some of the commonly requested facilities include: locker rooms, a hospitality area for coaches and officials, a concession area, a swimmers' rest area, an officials' briefing area, a staging or seeding area, an administrative area, an awards area, and parking lots. Commonly needed meet equipment includes tables, chairs, sound system, electronic timing system, bleachers, lane lines, backstroke flags, starting blocks, and extension cords. Special provisions that might be needed could include: overnight parking, first aid room and supplies, and scheduled times to perform pre-meet setup and preview the facility for safety problems.

**Prepare the Meet Announcement (60 days prior):** The sanction is dependent on guidelines by USA Swimming, one of which is required information in the Meet Announcement. Use the meet template posted on MESI website under Policies/Forms as it contains all of the required language. The Meet Referee should review the Meet Announcement prior to submission. Any changes to session times, formats, venues or other changes before the meet must be approved by the Sanction Chair and publicized to all attendees (see Meet Announcement Section Below)..

**Arrange the Meet Personnel (USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.10-102.14) (MESI P & P 1703):** Prior to applying for a sanction, the MD must secure a Meet Referee, Starter, Administrative Official, two Stroke and Turn Officials and a Safety Monitor. All personnel must be currently registered and in good-standing for the length of the meet. The MESI Officials' Chair can provide the Meet Director with a list of currently certified USA Swimming officials. It is the responsibility of the host club to ensure adequate staffing of officials. In addition, Meet Marshals must be on deck, but do not have to be USA Swimming members. If they are not USA-S members then they must sign a Liability Release Form for Volunteers. They should wear fluorescent vests for clear identification. Their responsibilities are noted on [Marshal cards](#) and should be clearly explained.

**Obtain the Meet Sanction (45 days prior):** Submit the Sanction Application with the Meet Announcement, Meet Back-up and fees to the MESI office via the online form posted on the website at least 45 days prior to the event. When all conditions of the sanction application have been satisfied, including any needed corrections to the Meet Announcement, a sanction number will be issued and the Meet Announcement and Events File will be posted on the MESI website.

**Order Awards, when appropriate:** Careful consideration should be given to the level of competition and to any specific MESI guidelines when selecting the awards. Common practice is to award medals for first through third place, with ribbons given to the fourth through eighth place or to award ribbons for places equal to the number of lanes in the pool being used for the meet. A minimum of six weeks is

usually required from the time of the order to the actual delivery. Extra awards should always be ordered to allow for ties or errors. Awards for heat winners are recommended for 12 and under swimmers.

**Send the Meet Back-up to the MESI Office:** It is the responsibility of the Meet Director to assure that all swimmers in the meet are USA-S registered. The Monday before the meet (after all entries have been received), send the meet back-up to the MESI for registration reconciliation and review of the session timelines. The Office will provide a report of any unregistered swimmers, non-athletes not properly registered and any issues with session timelines. Any swimmers added to the meet after this process should be reported to the office to verify registration. As per MESI P & P 708, both the host organization and the club that enters an unregistered swimmer will be subject to a \$100.00 fine by the MESI Board of Directors with a recommendation from the MESI Membership/Registration Chair for each unregistered swimmer found to have competed in a meet. Allowing unregistered swimmers and coaches on deck jeopardizes the insurance and sanction for the meet.

**Print the Meet Programs and/or Heat Sheets:** (Note: Meet Mobile may be used in place of meet programs, when appropriate.) Be sure all printing equipment is in good working order and that there is an extra ink and toner cartridge available. All printed documents **MUST** have the sanction number in the header.

**Prepare and Distribute the Final Meet Results:** After the meet results are finalized by the Administrative Official, send the meet back-up to the MESI Office for a final registration check and times check. After clearance from the office send out the final results to all teams in attendance. Results will also be posted on the MESI website and uploaded into the SWIMS database. The final results should include both the preliminary and final times of all swimmers competing in each event. If time trials are held, those results must also be included in the final results.

Respective record-breaking times should be noted for each event. Split times can be noted. All disqualifications signed by the referee must be recorded at the end of each event with "DQ" noted in lieu of a time.

**File the Appropriate Post-Meet Reports with MESI (MESI P & P 904):** The final meet results should be emailed within 7 days of the meet to the Maine Swimming Office as the backup, Team Manager results and a pdf. It is the Meet Director's responsibility to ensure these results are e-mailed within the specified time and to ensure the Meet Referee has updated the Officials Tracking System with the officials who staffed the meet. The financial report and Hy-tek Team Entry Report should be submitted online and payment should be made either online or via check to the MESI Sanction Chair within 7 days of the swim meet.

**Submit Any Necessary Report of Occurrence:** Submit a Report of Occurrence for any accidents or injuries that occurred as part of the meet.

## **Meet Announcement**

The Meet Director is usually responsible for the compilation of the meet announcement while the Entry Chairperson or the Administrative Official may be responsible for the event file. The Meet Director may

also be responsible for the development of a meet format (i.e., the events offered and order of these events). With the exception of championship and open water meets, the program in all other age groups 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 in a total of eight (8) hours or less per day for a preliminaries and finals meet. (U. S. Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 2:05.3.1.F) and (MESI P & P 700).

### ***Competitive Classifications***

*Senior/Open:* All athlete members of USA Swimming are eligible to compete in a Senior or Open event.  
*Age Group:* All registered swimmers 18 years old and younger grouped by ages. Recommended events are listed in USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.1.2.

### ***Event Limitations***

(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.2)

No swimmer is allowed to compete in more than three individual events on a single day when preliminaries and finals are held or six individual events per day for a timed finals format. In meets where a combination of preliminary and final events and timed finals are held, a swimmer is limited to three individual events per day, unless entered exclusively in timed finals events on that day. These limitations include time trials or other competitions held on the same day, even though separate sanctions have been issued.

### ***Warm-ups***

USA Swimming policy requires warm-up procedures for all sanctioned meets. These guidelines and procedures require that the warm-up is marshaled and racing starts are not allowed except as designated in sprint lanes. The warm-up and safety guidelines specific for the meet (six lanes versus eight lanes, etc.) should be posted prominently at several locations around the pool. The guidelines must be adhered to, with the Meet Referee having the authority to remove a swimmer/coach/club from the venue and meet for failure to conform.

### ***Meet Fees***

(MESI P & P 901)

Meet fees are structured based on the guidelines established by MESI. Host teams have some leeway in establishing fees that meet their needs to cover costs such as facility rental. MESI will collect Athlete Travel Fees, splash fees, etc as noted in the guidelines. All meet fees should be clearly outlined in the meet announcement.

### ***Advertising and Sponsorship***

(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Article 102.8.3)

Hosting a swim meet is an expensive undertaking. Meet costs can be partially defrayed with advertising and sponsorship revenue. The advertising and sponsorship committee often functions on a year-round basis. It takes a great deal of time and effort to solicit funds, but a small, dedicated committee with quality leadership can be very effective. Copy and advertisements must be given to

the program committee at least one to two weeks prior to the meet date. If a contract is signed for in-kind services, special sponsor needs (e.g., free tickets, banners, public address acknowledgements, etc.) should be reviewed carefully with the committee, Meet Director and facilities manager.

***Smoking, Drinking and Cell Phones, Cameras and Other Recording Devices Ban***  
(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, Articles 102.26-27)

Smoking or the use of any other tobacco products is prohibited on the pool deck, in the locker rooms, in spectator seating or standing areas, and in all areas used by swimmers, during the meet or warm-up periods in connection with the meet. The sale or use of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in all areas of the venue. Cell Phones, Cameras and Other Recording Devices are prohibited from locker rooms and from behind the starting blocks.

***Time Trials***

Whether or not time trials will be offered should be outlined in the meet announcement. Time trials must be included in the total number of individual events in which a swimmer may compete each day (USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, Article 102.2). Be sure to check an athlete's number of events before allowing a time trial. The Meet Director should inform all volunteers of the added time trials. If an individual is unable to commit him/herself for the extra time, the Meet Director should then find a replacement for anyone with a conflict. Swimmers competing in time trials must provide their own timers

**Meet Personnel**

A good Meet Director delegates responsibilities to committees. Committee chairs should be chosen at least 90 days prior to the actual meet date. Plans and assignments for every aspect of meet operation should be made well in advance, even though some of the functions will not be performed until the meet. Good communication between the Meet Director and the committee chairs is vital. Individual meetings with each chair should follow an initial meeting of all chairs. Another meeting should be held just before the meet to work out any last-minute problems. The Meet Director should establish specific reporting dates and deadlines for each of the following committees and key positions. After the competition, the Meet Director should meet with the committee chairs and discuss these ideas and the overall competition in general.

***Admissions***  
(MESI P & P 902)

Admissions personnel distribute programs and collect admission fees. They should arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of warm-up. Admission to all MESI sanction meets is no more than \$2.00 per session. The price of the program is determined by the host club and posted in the meet announcement.

***Announcer***  
(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, Article 102.21)

Announcers must be selected with great care. An announcer should have a clear, pleasant voice and be able to function under pressure. At most meets, the function of an announcer is to state the facts (i.e. event, heat, swimmer's names, etc.), not commentate. Unnecessary comments or announcements merely add to the confusion at such meets.

### ***Awards (if applicable)***

The Meet Director should have ordered the awards before the committee itself is formed. This committee is responsible for organizing and presenting the meet awards. Preparing awards for distribution takes time; pre-planning and organization are essential. Awards not collected by swimmers should either be forwarded to the swimmer's club coach or representative.

### ***Computer Operator/Clerk of course***

(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, Article 102.20)

This individual should have a protected, but easily accessible, work location on or adjacent to the pool deck. This individual is responsible for taking scratches, noting no shows, distributing lane timer sheets, etc.

### ***Concessions***

The chair should be selected six to eight weeks before the meet. This committee is responsible for menu planning, shopping, food preparation and staffing the snack bar during the meet. The Meet Director or a member of the committee should check local ordinances regarding the preparation and sale of food. Soliciting food donations can save a great deal of money. The host club and locale of a meet will often dictate stocking of a concession stand.

### ***Electronic Timing Operators***

(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, Article 102.17.4)

Most meets make use of electronic timing equipment. Using this type of system requires recruiting thoroughly trained and experienced operators well before the meet. They should be capable, not only of operating the equipment, but also of hooking it up properly and troubleshooting any problems. During the meet, it is the equipment operator's responsibility to report to the referee any malfunctions or missed touches that may occur.

### ***Entry Chair***

This individual will receive all meet entries, including entry fees, and is responsible for checking each entry file carefully. Each competitor and coach must be a current member of USA Swimming. Verification of swimmers will be accomplished by doing a meet registration reconciliation with the MESI Registration Chair. Both the host organization and the club that allows an unregistered swimmer to compete will be subject to a \$100.00 fine for each unregistered swimmer found to have competed in a meet. Any person or organization, who falsely claims that a swimmer is registered, when in fact that swimmer is not registered, is subject to a maximum fine of \$100.00 by the MESI Board of Directors with a recommendation from the MESI Registration Chair. . (USA Swimming Rules and Regulations

## Article 302.4) (MESI P & P 708)

If a qualifying meet, entry times must be checked against the time standards for the corresponding events. The number of events per swimmer must be checked to verify that no swimmer has exceeded the meet entry limitation. If a swimmer has entered too many events on any day, a notation should be made so that the swimmer can be notified at the meet of the necessity of scratching excess events. The monies received must agree with the number of entries.

It is often necessary to prepare an entry summary by team, sex and/or age. Summaries for each day by sex and age group, showing each swimmer's events for that day can be used as check-in sheets for deck-seeded meets. If entry problems cannot be resolved easily, team representatives should be contacted and a list of changes and corrections should be kept.

Once the entries are organized, they are seeded as per USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, Article 102.5.

### ***Facilities***

(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, Article 103.1-19)

This committee will work closely with the facility personnel (lifeguards, marshals, timing equipment operators, etc.). In general, these individuals are responsible for transporting equipment to and from the meet site, preparing the facility and equipment for the meet, and cleaning up after the meet. The facilities committee is also responsible for establishing a lost and found area and for overseeing meet safety procedures. .

### ***Hospitality***

Hospitality is responsible for serving refreshments to officials, coaches and other workers as appropriate.. Water should be readily available.

### ***Programs***

If the meet is pre-seeded, the heat sheet is given to the program committee prior to the meet for printing. If not, then the psych sheet is provided. The cover page should include basic meet information from the meet information packet (e.g., the date(s), USA Swimming sanction number, meet sponsor(s), etc.).

Suggested information to include in the program:

1. A meet timeline with the order of events. It should be noted whether the timeline is an "estimate only" or whether it is an assurance an event will not start before the times listed.
2. Special notes (e.g., notes on parking regulations, the press area, etc.)
3. The name and address of the person responsible for lost and found and where it is located.
4. Sponsors' advertisements or acknowledgements.
5. A list of participating teams .
6. Event records (e.g., meet, regional or age group).
7. Applicable qualifying times or standards.

When trying to determine the total number of programs needed, count on one program for every 10 entries in a 2-day meet, figuring in extra copies for the coaches and team files. Use one-third the total number of swimmers as a guide when calculating the amount of programs that will be available for sale.

### ***Runners***

Runners shuttle material (e.g., heat sheets, results) from station to station during the meet. These workers are literally "runners." It is helpful to have one person coordinating the efforts of all runners to avoid confusion and lost material.

### ***Scorer***

Scoring is handled through the meet management software and is set up by the meet host. Examples below:

Six lanes - Relays: 14-10-8-6-4-2 points Individual events: 7-5-4-3-2-1 point(s)

Eight lanes - Relays: 18-14-13-10-8-6-4-2 points Individual events: 9-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 point(s)

### ***Timers***

(USA Swimming Rules and Regulations, Article 102.17)

These workers must be diligent and dedicated to ensure success. The head timer is responsible for recruiting and supervising the timers and runners during the meet. The head timer ensures that all timers and their watches are functioning properly, replacing timers or watches when necessary. The head timer's watch is started for each heat and is used to replace any watch that may malfunction or that did not start during any given heat. The head timer should work with the Meet Referee to hold a timer's meeting prior to the start of each session to review the protocols and responsibilities of the timing position.

## **Meet Evaluation**

Each Meet Director should keep his/her own personal observations for use in improving the next meet or for aiding successive Meet Directors and should file a post-meet report with suggestions for change and improvement. The Meet Director should send out the [MESI Meet Evaluation Form](#) to all attending teams to solicit feedback for future meets.

## GLOSSARY

**Check In:** The indication that a swimmer intends to participate in an event.

**Championship Final:** The fastest 6, 8 or 10 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a prelims/finals meet who, after the prelims swim, qualify to return to the finals.

**Consolation Final:** The race in a prelims/finals meet that determines final places and times for the next fastest swimmers who failed to qualify for the championship final. Swimmers in a consolation final may not place ahead of swimmers in the final heat regardless of their time. Generally this heat determines places 9 through 16.

**Deck-entered meet:** A meet where all entries are accepted on the first or a later day of that meet and are subsequently seeded into events.

**Deck entries:** Accepting entries into swimming events on the first day or later day of a meet.

**Entry Times:** Times filed with an entry as having been previously achieved.

**Event:** Any race or series of races (heats) in a given stroke and distance. For competitive limits, one event equals one preliminary or one timed final, or one preliminary plus the corresponding final.

**Final:** Any single race that determines the final places and times in an event.

**Finals:** A session of a meet in which the concluding heats of an event are contested which may include championship, consolation or bonus finals.

**Heat:** A division of an event used when there are too many swimmers to compete simultaneously.

**Qualifying heat (preliminaries):** A competition in which a number of heats are swum to qualify the fastest swimmers for the finals.

**Timed final heat:** A competition in which only heats are swum and final placings are determined by the times achieved in the heats.

**Heat sheet:** A form used for listing swimmers entered in an event, which designates the swimmer's seeded heat and lane for the event.

**Invitational competition:** For those swimmers, organizations and clubs invited by the host.

**LSC (Local Swimming Committee):** An administrative division of USA Swimming with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries designated by USA Swimming.

**May:** Permissive, not mandatory.

**Meet:** A series of events held in one program.

**Mixed Relays:** Relays that consist of two males and two females in any order.

**No-show:** Failure of a swimmer to report to the blocks and compete after checking in.

**Open competition:** Competition which any qualified club, organization or individual may enter.

**Psych sheet:** A list of swimmers in each event in ascending or descending order of entry times.

**Relay Lead-Off Split:** An officially recorded time for the swimmer on the 1st leg of a relay. Official splits must be requested from the Meet Referee.

**Rulebook:** In this handbook, "rulebook" refers to the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.

**Sanction:** A permit issued by an LSC to conduct an event or meet.

**Scratch:** To withdraw an entry from competition in an event.

**Seed:** To distribute the swimmers among the required number of heats and/or lanes according to their entry or preliminary times.

**Seeding:**

**Pre-seeded heats:** Swimmers are arranged in heats in each event according to entry times. Heat sheets listing the lane and heat assignments are prepared prior to the day of competition.

**Deck-seeded heats:** Swimmers check-in on the day of the meet. After scratches are determined, the remaining swimmers are seeded into the proper heats and lanes. Swimmers are notified of their heat and lane assignment by means of individual cards or posted heat sheets.

**Shall or Must:** Mandatory.

**Split time:** Time recorded from an official start to completion of an initial distance within a longer event.

**Submitted times:** Times filed with an entry, as having been previously achieved.

**Time standard:** The time a swimmer must have previously achieved to enter that event.

**Time trial:** An event conducted within or independently of a meet where a swimmer races against the clock to establish an official time

Updated 10/30/2020

