



COVID-19 Competition & Pool Guidelines Maine Swimming LSC

The following material has been developed to provide expectations and guidance for hosting swim meets, practices, and other swimming activities as pool facilities and swim clubs incorporate COVID-19 considerations. The guidelines herein are presented in no particular order of importance. Please read the entire listing as all apply equally.

Introduction and Summary:

Maine Swimming (MESI) is a Local Swim Club (LSC) that is part of the national USA Swimming organization. Under the most recent COVID-19 guidance issued by the State of Maine, MESI is classified as a “Community Sport Organization” and, therefore, all clubs, athletes, coaches, volunteers, and those affiliated with MESI, must abide by these expectations and relevant State requirements. The State of Maine defines swimming as a low to moderate COVID-19 risk activity, with team swimming defined as moderate risk. Each club/team should work with their local pool facility (e.g. YMCA) to ensure adherence to both the State of Maine guidelines and requirements, along with MESI expectations. Please review the State guidance and requirements in addition to this document.
<https://www.maine.gov/decd/checklists/community-sports>

Each club/team wishing to be considered for a sanctioned or an approved meet must complete a “Return to Competition Plan” (Plan) as detailed in the attached USA Swimming publication. The items in the document must be incorporated into your Plan, as well as your club/teams specific local considerations. A Plan must be submitted with each meet request. A Plan must be communicated to all attendees prior to each meet.

For sanctioned meets, the host team must secure a Meet Referee that will guide you through the ever-changing expectations of hosting the meet. If you need a Meet Referee, contact Henry Clauson at mesiofficialschair@gmail.com.

No approved or sanctioned meet can occur without concurrence with the LSC Officials Chair.

Failure to abide by the established MESI COVID-19 Competition & Pool Guidelines and USA Swimming expectations and/or the State of Maine guidelines may result in a financial penalty of up to **\$500** imposed on the violating club(s), along with addition sanctions not being approved for that/those entities for 12 months. The Meet Referee (or LSC Operational Risk Chair), LSC Officials Chair, and LSC Sanction Chair will be the 3 member governing body that will review, recommend, and assess penalties. Any protest or appeal of these penalties must be filed pursuant to Article 713 of the MESI Policies & Procedures.



Allowed Types of Meets:

1. Virtual Approved or Sanctioned Meet: This is a meet with one host team and one sanction for a period of up to 10 days across one or more sites. The sites are under the umbrella of the host team using the same order of events. Results will be merged and sent into the database. The host team Meet Referee needs to be up to date and in touch with the latest expectations. Results are uploaded into SWIM by the MESI Office. See: *USA-S Virtual Meet Information* documentation on the MESI website for additional guidance.
2. Approved or Sanctioned Intra-squad Meet: same as Virtual sanctioned meets but without other sites.
3. Approved or Sanctioned Dual Meet: Same as intra-squad but with two teams.
4. Approved or Sanctioned Multi Team Meet: Same as intra-squad but with multiple teams.
5. Non-Sanctioned Intra-squad Meets: No officials are required or should be used in a non-sanctioned meet. Results are for information purposes only and cannot be used for future seeding or qualification. All guidelines in this document still apply to non-sanctioned meets and activities, with the exception being the presence of officials. Results files are sent by the meet host to USA Swimming directly for loading into the non-sanctioned meet SWIMS database.

Applications for sanctioned or approved meets should be submitted at least seven (7) days prior to the event.

The following detailed guidelines are presented on the following pages for:

- 1) Pool Deck / Meet,**
- 2) Officials for Swim Meets,**
- 3) Athletes, and**
- 4) Spectators.**



Pool Deck / Meet:

- Total attendance limitations must be in accordance with State of Maine requirements / Executive Orders or the pool facility requirements, whichever is strictest. This includes swimmers, coaches, officials, timers, other roles, and spectators. Currently, the total capacity limit for all attendees, in accordance with the active State of Maine Executive Order effective March 26, 2021 through May 23, 2021:
 - 50% of permitted occupancy or 50 persons, whichever is greater, for **indoor** pool facilities; and,
 - 75% of permitted occupancy for **outdoor** pool facilities.
- Access to the pool deck / spectator area(s) should be controlled and attendance continuously recorded. Only persons pre-approved to attend a meet or practice session may do so.
- A complete facility pool deck (including blocks) clean and disinfection should occur before and after each meet session or practice session.
- Attendees will be allowed to participate in a sanctioned meet only if they complete the required MESI waivers (See MESI website for these forms):
 - 1) MESI COVID-19/Photography Waiver (once per season).
 - 2) MESI COVID-19 Affirmation Form (per meet). Each participant or attendee must submit within 72 hours prior to the start of the meet as designated in the Meet Announcement. Each participant and/or attendee (or legal guardian) must sign both forms in order to attend the meet. Electronic copies of these forms must be kept on file with the hosting club for each meet. It is recommended that these forms are sent, received, and filed electronically. These forms will be used for contact tracing if a positive COVID-19 case is detected.
- All attendees must wear a facemask at all times. The only exception is for a swimmer in the water.
 - A facemask must fit correctly, and cover both nose and mouth.
 - Failure to wear a facemask will result in an immediate one-time on-deck warning; subsequent violations will result in pool activity stoppage until the individual(s) leave(s) the facility.
- Coaches should remain stationary and physically distanced by 6' or more to the extent possible.
- Floor / seat markings are encouraged to define physical spacing. This for all competition and spectator areas.
- No persons may gather on the turn end of the pool. Only Officials should be present on the turn end. The only exception is for longer distance events where lap counters are needed, and then, only one lap counter / person per lane.



- Multiple sessions may need to occur to comply with capacity limitations. No more than three (3) sessions per day. The host team must allow enough time between sessions for a facility cleaning (in accordance with the local facility expectations).
- Practices, as well as warm ups and warm downs at meets, may occur, but are limited to no more than **3** swimmers per lane at one time **and all swimmers in the lane must be from the same team**. During a meet session, consider using a designated lane(s) for warm up and warm down.
- Only one person in a bathroom at a time. If a locker room is the only available bathroom space, that locker room must be closed to all other usage with only limited persons allowed in at a time (in accordance with facility guidelines). Bathrooms / locker-rooms must be monitored **and thoroughly disinfected after each session**. **Frequent disinfection throughout the meet is encouraged**.
- Staging of swimmers for next heat should occur in a designated area on or off deck. Traffic flow must be one way. For example, swimmers in the current heat exit the same direction while the next heat enters from the opposite direction (e.g. swimmers never pass each other). Staging should have a designated area and follow social distancing expectations. Swimmers should remain in the same order by lane assignment when entering and exiting the pool (e.g. swimmers should not pass each other).
- Meets should be pre-seeded. No deck entries are allowed. Limited deck modifications (e.g. lane changes, heat consolidations) are permitted at the discretion of the Meet Referee to promote better COVID-19 compliance and/or meet efficiency.
- The use of live stream media platforms is encouraged (e.g. Facebook Live, etc). It is suggested to have 1 designated volunteer running this platform.
- Relays are allowed but may be limited due to social distancing. An empty/open lane must exist between all relays in the same heat.

Officials for Swim Meets:

- Each venue must have an AO physically present.
- Multi-site meets should have one (1) AO, or equivalent qualified person, that is the “lead” AO and performs the results merge of the meet from all venues.
- Sanctioned and approved meet sessions must be staffed with a minimum of 4 officials. The minimum official’s positions are AO, Meet Referee, Deck Referee, Starter, and one (1) Stroke and Turn (S&T). The same person may serve as the Meet Referee and Deck Referee if that official is correctly certified. **Whenever possible, a meet should not be run with minimal officials**; a ratio of 1 S&T official per 3 lanes is the best practice standard.
 - For a YMCA meet that is USA approved, YMCA Level II officials must serve in the Deck Referee and Starter positions; alternatively, an appropriately



certified USA official may also serve in the Deck Referee and/or Starter role. The Deck Referee and Starter role may not be officiated by the same person. YMCA Level I officials may only serve as S&T officials. A minimum of one Level II YMCA official must officiate each session.

- At the discretion of the Meet Referee and in accordance with facility capacity limits, official shadowing may be allowed. No more than 2 shadow officials per session. All shadow roles must be requested via submission of the MESI “Request to Shadow” form: <https://form.jotform.com/203044268980053>. All shadow requests must be submitted at least 48 hours prior to the start of the meet, and approved by the MESI Officials Chair prior to the meet start. No shadow officials can participate in and get credit for a meet without an approved shadow request.
- Deck Referees must use an electronic whistle. If requested by a club, Maine Swimming will reimburse a club for up to two (2) electronic whistles. With the exception of the lifeguard and Deck Referee, no other person should use a whistle at a meet.
- Officials should be pre-assigned a wet or dry deck role and position by the Meet Referee prior to the start of the meet.
- Officials who leave the deck during a session, should not return without disinfection.
- Radio use is encouraged between officials. If not available, communications should be limited and preferably written.
- Deck Referee and Starter should be on opposite sides of the pool.
- No official(s) should be positioned behind the blocks. Start-end S&T officiating should be performed by the Starter, Deck Referee, or a designated official(s) from the side of the pool.
- Officials should be physically distanced by 6’ or more to the extent possible.
- Only minimal verbal interaction should occur with the AO.
- If radios are available, the following best practice should be considered:
 - Disqualification (DQ) slips are discouraged, but are allowed at the discretion of the Meet Referee.
 - If no DQ’s slips are used, DQs or other issues should be called into the Deck or Meet Referee, and if accepted, recorded on a heat sheet. Other typical radio protocols apply.
 - If DQ’s slips are used, DQs or other issues should be called into the Deck or Meet Referee, and if accepted, recorded on DQ slips. Other typical radio protocols apply.
 - DQs should be processed by the AO once verbally approved by the Deck or Meet Referee.



- If radios are unavailable, the following best practice should be considered:
 - DQ slips are discouraged, but are allowed at the discretion of the Meet Referee.
 - DQs should be recorded on a heat sheet (or DQ slip if being used), and shown to the Deck Referee at the end of the event, and then processed by the AO by the end of the event. A Chief Judge (CJ) may be used to aid processing and communication of DQs, provided such can be accommodated within facility capacity limits.

- Timers:
 - Limited to one (1) timer per lane, and one (1) backup timer per session.
 - Should limit speaking to or assisting the swimmers.
 - Should be pre-assigned prior to the meet to a lane.
 - Should not rotate in role or position during a session.
 - Should each have a spray bottle of disinfectant available.
 - Are responsible for disinfecting the blocks and other lane specific equipment after each heat, or as decided by the facility.
 - Who leave the deck during a Session, may not return without disinfection.
 - Should maintain 6' distance to the extent practical from the block as swimmers are starting or exiting the lane.
 - Should only approach the block / edge of the pool as the lane swimmer completes the heat; otherwise, should stand at least 6' behind the block, and from others in attendance, to the extent practical.
 - Typical COVID-19 timer protocol for each heat. Should be reviewed with all timers prior to each session:
 - Remain 6' distance behind block / away from the athlete as they approach block.
 - Remaining 6' distance behind block at start. Begin watch timer(s) with starter signal light.
 - Only approach the block at the end of heat. Stop timer(s) and any manual plungers.
 - Step back to 6' distance behind blocks before the athlete exits the pool.
 - Once athletes have left the block area, disinfect all surfaces touched by the athlete and athlete's belongings (e.g. facemask). This could include the block surfaces, backstroke ledges, backstroke handles, chairs, hook/hangers, etc.
 - Repeat the process for each heat. Always maintain distance from the athlete.

- All meet equipment (pens, clipboards, stopwatches, timing buttons, etc...) should be sanitized with wipes or cleaner containing at least 70% alcohol after each session.



Athletes:

- Must remain masked at all times, except when swimming. Bring a plastic bag or use a facility provide receptacle (e.g. plastic basket, chair, hanger, etc.) to put your mask into or on when behind blocks before heat. Masks should not be placed on the blocks. Masks should be put back on as soon as swimmers exit the water to the extent practical. Bring extra masks in case one gets wet.
- Should physically distance 6' or greater from any other person to the extent possible.
- Should arrive and depart the facility in their swimsuits. Locker rooms use should be limited or not used.
- Should minimize their personal belongings brought to a meet. Belongings should be kept tidy and self-contained. Loose belongings will be discarded.
- During a heat, only essential personal equipment should be brought to the starting block area. For example, swim cap, goggles, and a facemask. No towels, sweatshirts, robes, phones, headphones, etc will be allowed.
- Should not share water or food.
- Only the active heat of swimmer(s) allowed behind the assigned block at any time.
- Must remain in their designated area.
- Any swimmer leaving the pool deck, must disinfect hands and body before returning to the deck.
- If not on a facility designated seating space (e.g. bleacher, chairs, etc.), athletes should bring a chair or extra towel to sit on for wherever they are waiting for their event(s).
- Swimmers should remain in the same order by lane assignment when entering and exiting the pool from/to the heat staging area (e.g. swimmers should not pass each other).



Spectators:

- Should be discouraged. If unavoidable, spectators should be kept to a minimum. Only one (1) person per swimmer allowed. If an immediate family has multiple sibling swimmers, then still only one (1) spectator person in total. Attendance by young children or the elderly is strongly discouraged.
- The use of live stream media platforms is encouraged (e.g. Facebook Live, etc.).
- **All spectators are counted in the facility capacity limit.** Any spectator in the same room (e.g. spectator area of a pool deck) counts towards total session allowance (e.g. the less spectators = more swimmers)
- Personal belongings kept to a minimum. No backpacks, chairs, or extra gear in stands.
- No food or drink allowed.
- Should remain masked and physically distanced 6' or greater from any other person to the extent possible.

This document (Return to Competition Guidelines) was adopted by the MESI Board of Directors on August 17, 2020.

Changes to this document may occur on a regular basis to comply with USA Swimming, State of Maine, or other COVID-19 guidelines imposed on Maine Swimming LSC. Subsequent changes may also include lessons learned efficiencies without compromising safety. Such document changes and revisions will be reviewed and approved by majority vote of the MESI Crisis Management Committee; however, any revisions must be done in concurrence with the MESI Sanction Chair and MESI Officials Chair. The most recent version of this document will be maintained on the MESI website.

REV0: August 17, 2020

REV1: October 12, 2020

REV2: January 25, 2021

REV3: February 22, 2021

REV4: March 26, 2021

REV5: April 12, 2021