

Metropolitan Swimming
New Officials' Clinic Agenda
Revised October 2021

Thank you for your interest in becoming a certified USA Swimming Official within the Metropolitan Swimming (Metro) Local Swim Committee (LSC)! What follows may at first appear daunting and complicated (and, in truth, it is a bit of both), but we will cover everything in detail during this clinic and you will be guided through everything not just during this clinic, but after it as well. Please direct any questions about the process of becoming an official to Darryl Strabuk, the Metro New Officials' Training Coordinator at officials.training@metroswimming.org.

I. Getting Started (these steps must be completed before you can begin your on-deck training):

1. **Set up** a free member record with USA Swimming at
 - <https://www.usaswimming.org/register>
 - When setting up your member record, make sure it is not a shared account and that you **select the link accounts option**. Doing so will ensure that all your information will be directed to your account.
2. **Attend** an on-line clinic for new Stroke and Turn Judges
3. **Submit** an
 - **apprentice membership form** (free and good for 60 days, during which time all other requirements must be completed)or
 - a **regular non-athlete membership** form (which costs \$78 fee membership and is good until 12/31/2022).
 - Both forms can be found on the Metro Swimming home page (metroswimming.org) under the officials' tab or at this link:
 - <https://www.teamunify.com/team/mrlsc/page/metro-forms/officials-forms>
 - Please submit your forms to the Metro office (metro.office@metroswimming.org)
 - Please be sure to notify Darryl Strabuk at officials.training@metroswimming.org once you've submitted your form.
4. **Notify Darryl** after completing steps 1, 2, and 3 so that he can assign you your apprentice Stroke and Turn Judge certification, which will appear as AP and issue you a Deck Pass (LSC certification card). Without this card indicating your AP certification, you **cannot** begin your on-deck training. You must display this card whenever you are on deck officiating.

Additional requirements (the order here is recommended, not required):

1. **Complete a free, on-line athlete protection training program:**
 - <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/safe-sport/apt>
 - In order to gain access to this training

- You must have established a member record by creating a USA Swimming member account
 - and**
 - You must have submitted either a regular, non-athlete membership or a 60-day apprentice official form
 - This training takes about 30 minutes and must be renewed annually
 - It expires one year from the date on which you complete it
2. **Complete a Level II background check** through the USA Swimming web site: <https://www.usaswimming.org/background-checks>
 - There is a fee for this that varies depending on a number of factors.
 - The background check is valid for two years.
 3. **Complete a free, on-line concussion protocol training course**
 - FAQs about this requirement can be found [HERE](#).
 - Here are the links to popular courses - [CDC Course](#), [NFHS Course](#)
 4. **Become familiar with the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy:** <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/landing-pages/minor-athlete-abuse-prevention-policy#sts=MAAPP%20Sample%20forms>
 - This policy applies to all USA Swimming non-athlete members and all athlete members 18 and older.
 5. **Complete and pass the on-line Stroke and Turn Judge test:**
 - <https://www.usaswimming.org/officials/popular-resources/online-testing>
 - On the above page you will find instructions for taking the test and a link to the rule book you will need to complete it.
 - You may take the test at any time, but you may find it best to do so after completing a few on-deck sessions.
 6. **Complete at least 6 on-deck apprentice training sessions.**
 You are required to do these sessions because it is important the you have sufficient experience judging strokes as an apprentice before you become fully certified.
 7. If you earlier submitted an apprentice official membership form, **you must submit** a regular, paid non-athlete registration (\$78 for 2022)
 8. **Notify Darryl** whe you have completed all the requirements.
 - After completing your requirements, the system **will not** automatically change your certification from AP (apprentice) to Q (qualified). This something that must be done manually.
 - Once you hear from me that your certifications have been updated and that you have been advanced to being a certified (qualified) official (congratulations!) you will be able to print out your own Deck Pass (LSC certification card), which you can do from the My Deck Pass link on your USA Swimming account.

- Credentials must be displayed whenever you are on deck officiating.

II. On the Pool Deck

1. Who is who at a swim meet and what are their responsibilities:

Wet side: Meet Referee	Dry side: Meet Director
Deck Referee	Administrative Official
Chief Judge	
Stroke and Turn Judge	

2. Required uniform

- White collared polo shirt, tucked in. Shirts may not have team names or team-related emblems unless they are from championship or named meets, for example, Senior Mets, JOs, or Silvers.
- Navy blue shorts, pants, skirts, skorts.
- White socks, clean, mostly white sneakers or shoes. No crocs and no sandals.
- Credentials

3. Meet protocol and comportment on deck

- Contact the Meet Referee to notify her or him of the sessions you will be attending. A Meet Referee's contact information can be found on the Meet Central tab of the Metro home page: <https://www.teamunify.com/team/mrlsc/page/meet-central/19-20-sc>
- Sign in on deck when you arrive at venue at beginning of warm-ups
- Attend officials' pre-session meeting, at which there will be a stroke briefing and at which jurisdictions and deck positions will be assigned (briefing are usually held 30-45 minutes prior to start of session).
- Maintain a professional attitude on deck at all times.
- No cheering for a specific swimmer or team while on deck.
- Do not use a cell phone when on deck
- Be respectful of fellow officials, coaches, athletes, and other meet volunteers
- **Adhere strictly to all state, local, and facility COVID protocols, especially the mask requirement, and maintain strict social distancing at all times**

4. The technical rules of swimming

- USA Swimming Officials' Training videos: <https://www.usaswimming.org/officials/how-to-become-an-official>
- These technical *rules* are the basis of all that officials do; it is the responsibility of the Stroke and Turn Judge to ensure that all swimmers are *competing within the rules*.
- Know the rules and apply them consistently at all levels.

5. The role of a Stroke and Turn Official

- It is the role of the stroke and turn judge to observe the swimmers in his or her jurisdiction, and report an infraction if he or she **observes** something outside of the rules.
- Do not infer or extrapolate.
 - a. Officials must specifically, personally, observe an infraction in order to report it.
 - b. For example, in order to call a one-hand touch in the butterfly or breaststroke, the official must observe one hand **NOT** touch (as opposed to simply observing only one hand touch).

- Remember the **Golden Rule**: the swimmer **ALWAYS** gets the benefit of the doubt.
 - If there is **ANY** doubt or uncertainty as to whether or not an infraction was committed by a swimmer, do not report the infraction.
 - An official may withdraw a call at **ANY** time if the official later doubts his or her call.
6. **Being on deck as an apprentice Stroke and Turn Judge**
- You will walk alongside and work closely with a certified, experienced official
 - You should ask the official who is mentoring and training you any and all questions about what you observe during races.
 - Your mentors/trainers will discuss with you such things as where to stand and walk, what you should be looking for in the pool, what your jurisdiction is, how you should scan the lanes in it, and many, many other things.
 - Metro has an excellent, experienced team of officials, and it is during your apprentice sessions, when you work closely with more experienced officials that you most important and interesting training will occur.

7. **What to do when you observe a possible infraction**

- Remember the **Golden Rule**: the swimmer **ALWAYS** gets the benefit of the doubt
- Call what you see, not what you think you saw
- Raise your arm straight up and keep it up until acknowledged by Referee or Chief Judge
- Report what you observed as precisely as you can using the language of the rule book
- Unless relieved by a stand-by official, continue officiating after observing and while reporting the infraction to Referee or Chief Judge

8. **Philosophy:**

- Be active, not reactive
 - Be in the proper position and know the technical rules
 - Be preventative
 - Be professional
 - Be polite
 - Be on time for briefings and sessions
 - Be respectful
 - Be positive
 - Be a team player
 - Do not be punitive
 - Be patient
- Remember, Stroke and Turn judges are *observers* not *inspectors* and are there to ensure that the competition is conducted fairly.

III. Once You Are a Certified (qualified) Official

- **Track of your sessions in the Officials' Tracking System (OTS):**
<https://www.usaswimming.org/officials/popular-resources/officials-tracking-system>
- All sessions you work at a meet will be entered into OTS by the meet referee.
- You must work a minimum of 6 sessions a year (which runs from September 1 to August 31) to

maintain your certification (this requirement has been suspended during COVID)

- Renew your non-athlete membership annually
- Renew your Athlete Protection Training annually
- Renew your Background Check every two years
- Recertify every 3 years by attending a recertification clinic and taking the appropriate recertification test
- Think about advancing within the LSC and about getting your national certifications
- Go to meets and get to know the other members of the Metro officiating team, learn a lot, and have fun!

IV. Internet Resources

Metropolitan Swimming

- www.metroswimming.org

Officials' forms

- <https://www.teamunify.com/team/mrlsc/page/metro-forms/officials-forms>

Metro Policy and Procedures Manual

- <https://www.teamunify.com/team/mrlsc/page/about/metro-documents>

USA Swimming

- www.usaswimming.org

Contains a wealth of information and materials especially for officials. Sign in to your USA Swimming account, go to the 'For you' tab, then to 'officials' and start exploring!

V. Questions & Answers

VI. Contacts

Metropolitan Swimming Officials' Committee:

Chair: Mark Amodio (mark.amodio@metroswimming.org)

New Officials Training Coordinator: Darryl Strabuk
(officials.training@metroswimming.org)

Advancement and Certification Coordinator: Steve Kessler (forfeitboy@gmail.com)

At-large Member: Jennifer Bancroft (jen@paynecentral.com)

Athlete Representative: Fiona O'Donnell-McCarthy (fionaodmc@gmail.com)

Athlete Representative: Stanley Wong (stanley.wong@metroswimming.org)

Metro Office, Mary Fleckenstein, Office Administrator (metro.office@metroswimming.org)