



## How to Become an Official with SRST

Thank you for your interest in becoming a USA Swimming Official and volunteering to help StingRay Swim Team (SRST) and Pacific Northwest Swimming (PNS). This document has most of the details you'll need to become an official.

As way of background, there are 3 categories of swimming officials, each of which require at least a year of service before you can progress to the next level. The order is Stroke & Turn, Starter, and Referee and there is a requirement that you attend a clinic at each level (for certification) and another re-certification clinic every 2 years. If you plan on progressing to the next level, the new level certification clinic satisfies the requirement of attending your current position re-certification clinic. These are the "wet side" of officiating - there is also a "dry side" position called Administrative Official who oversees the paperwork of a meet (reporting to the Meet Referee) and is chiefly responsible for getting the swimmers their official time. Please note that PNS swimming has an annual requirement of 10 meet sessions of service for re-certification regardless of position.

### The requirements for becoming an official are as follows:

1. Attend a Stroke & Turn officials clinic as published on the PNS Officials Clinic page (<http://www.pns.org/SubTabGeneric.jsp?team=pnws2&stabid=49350>). Depending on the time of year, some clinics have already occurred – most often these are offered in the fall. However, if there enough interest from others, a request can be made to hold a Stroke & Turn or Administrative Official training session. There is a nominal cost for this \$10 – you'll want to RSVP to the listed instructor so they can plan on your attendance. You'll receive specific instructions on the certification process and your novice log at this training.
2. Apply for membership in USA Swimming as an official. This cost is typically covered by SRST - you'll see the charge on your account once you apply and once you are certified, we'll request a credit to your account. Please contact me so I can give you the form and process instructions. **Note: this is required before serving on deck in an officials capacity.**
3. Take and pass an open-book test. You'll receive your online results, which you'll submit to your instructor. Once you receive confirmation from your clinic instructor, you'll be ready to serve as a novice official.
4. Register for a USA Swimming personal account ([www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)). You'll need this to be able to access the Officials Tracking System (OTS) where you'll record all of your swim officiating activities and complete the next 2 steps. You'll need your registration number (from step #2) to tie all of your records together.
5. Take and pass the USA Swimming Athlete Protection training

<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1960&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en-US>). No charge for this training. **Note: this is required before serving on deck in an officials capacity.** This information is communicated with the PNS office - but get a copy of your completion certificate as backup.

6. Take and pass the USA Swimming Background Check.

<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1678&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>). There is a fee for this - you'll pay for this yourself, get a copy of the receipt and submit for reimbursement to SRST. **Note: this is required before serving on deck in an officials capacity.**

7. Serve as a novice official at 4 sessions for Stroke and Turn Official (5 sessions plus observation for Starter, 6 sessions plus observation for Referee) under 2 different meet referees and record this in your novice log. Before arriving on deck, you'll need to get your uniform of a white shirt (SRST may provide if there is an order going in), navy blue bottoms (shorts or pants, skirts for ladies) and white shoes (preferably all white - and avoid holes/perforations, otherwise they will get you wet).

8. Once you have determined that you are ready to officiate on your own and your final session meet referee recommends you for certification, you'll have this recorded on your novice log that will be submitted to your instructor. After this, you'll be able to order your name badge from PNS – and then you'll want to print out your certification card from the USA Swimming website. PNS will also be mailing a USA Swimming Official patch to you.

After this, you'll be a certified swimming official and this is one of those jobs that you'll learn something new every time. You'll record your **sessions** in the OTS and report your **hours** to the SRST Officials Coordinator. As you may know, there are other benefits (financial and otherwise) to being an official - and it's virtually guaranteed that you will satisfy all of your volunteer hours requirement, experience some fine hospitality when you officiate, and will most likely even be able to get "breaks" during your officiating session. Additional financial incentives are available for advancing your officiating work to Starter and Referee with SRST.

Officiating is a skill that needs practice so the more opportunities you take to officiate the better you'll become. Plan on officiating at all the meets your child attends and also be on the lookout for other opportunities to officiate at PNS Championship meets (or other meets sponsored by USA swimming). With this certification, you'll be in a perfect position to officiate (and lead) at summer league and high school meets as well.