

# MHSL and USA Swimming Rule Differences

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This document enables USA Swimming Officials to transfer their current credentials and become certified as an MHSL Official at the same level of certification.

Please review the following list of differences, sign the form and return to the MHSL Officials Chair via email at [officials@mhsl.org](mailto:officials@mhsl.org).

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am a USA Swimming certified official with a current certification level of \_\_\_\_\_ (Referee, Starter, S&T) and would like to apply my certification to become a Mountain Hi Swim League (MHSL) official. By signing this, I acknowledge that I have read the below rule differences between USA Swimming and the MHSL, and I understand the differences in those rules.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
MHSL Team

## **MHSL Rules That Differ From USA Swimming:**

### **Butterfly**

In the MHSL, only some portion of the arm, defined as the shoulder to the wrist, needs to recover over the water. It is not required that the entire arm recover over the water surface. So for example, if only the swimmers wrists are breaking the surface of the water, this is considered a legal over the water recovery.

### **Butterfly/Breaststroke**

For the Butterfly and Breaststroke touch, USA Swimming rules state that the “Touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface”. MHSL does not require separation of the hands for the Butterfly/Breaststroke touch. The hands can overlap each other (be stacked on top of each other)

### **Backstroke**

For the backstroke turn, the swimmer is allowed to roll past vertical towards the breast once the head reaches the backstroke flags. The swimmer **may** then take one single or simultaneous double arm pull to complete his/her turn. However, the turn does not have to be a continuous motion. The swimmer may glide or kick into the wall to make up distance.

### **6 & Under Events**

Swimmers participating in 6 & Under events can be subject to disqualification if they do not make a continuous attempt to swim the designated stroke (e.g., swimming freestyle during the entire length of a breaststroke event). **The Meet/Deck Referee must approve such a disqualification and sign the DQ slip.** The key here is that they do not have to swim the stroke legally, but they must make a continuous attempt at something that looks like that stroke.

### **False Starts**

In the MHSL, if there is a false start, the heat should be recalled. The swimmer who false-started should be informed that he/she is being charged with his/her first false start but not disqualified. If the swimmer subsequently false starts a second time in the same event, then he/she shall be disqualified.

### **Individual Medley and Medley Relay**

In the MHSL, the “Lochte Clarification” is not enforced. A swimmer may turn onto the back to breathe or rest without being disqualified, as long as the swimmer is not swimming on the back in the manner of the Backstroke. The key is to observe the stroke as being primarily the freestyle with just a brief rest on the back before continuing the freestyle.

**Swim Suits**

Use common sense when evaluating swimwear. As long as a garment like a swim shirt offers no flotation, compression or streamlining benefit, then allow. It is recommended that a questionable suit is reviewed by the Meet Referee prior to competition.

**Medical Devices**

Once again, common sense prevails. If the swimmer is wearing a brace that appears to offer no advantage, then allow. Similarly, swimmers may use elastic therapeutic tape or kinesio tape, as long as there is no apparent advantage provided. All medical devices must be approved prior to the start of competition by the Meet Referee.