

Return to Competition Roadmap and June Event Sanctions

To: Zone Directors, LSC General Chairs, LSC permanent staff, Club Presidents, Coaches

Over the last several weeks, planning for resuming practices has produced wide-ranging conversations about the role of competition in our return to pools. While the perspectives vary, what is clear is that our clubs and teams are looking for a conceptual plan for competition.

With that, we are sharing the framework of our three-month recommended roadmap for a safer return to competition for our members. This conceptual plan, based on the current health environment, encourages fostering competition in practice in June; the prospect of intra-squad, virtual meets, and small community-based dual meets in July; and regionally based competition in August.

Most importantly, all steps within this progressive strategy require compliance with local, state, and federal public health guidelines.

In support of our recommended approach, and in a continued effort to ensure an even and level playing field among all our LSC's, the USA Swimming Board of Directors has made the decision to revoke all existing USA Swimming sanctions and suspend granting sanctions through June 30, 2020. This action is intended to be the final prohibition on meet sanctioning (absent an adverse change in circumstances). While there are still significant safety considerations regarding meet sanctioning, including social distancing, travel, etc., the Board anticipates returning sanctioning control and discretion to LSC's (subject to certain restrictions) in July.

The targeted return-to-competition guidelines are further detailed below:

June

A return to practice, where possible, is our primary focus. When your athletes are ready, we encourage fostering competition in practice, making racing a fun part of your return to the pool plan. Whether you are racing 15 meters, odd distances, or their favorite event, keep it fun and use the opportunity to set positive expectations.

July

The goal is to return to small competitions such as sanctioned intrasquad meets, virtual meets, and potentially community-based dual meets. These meets may require individual age-groups, limited event orders, and new uses of technology.

August

USA Swimming staff continues to plan for a regionally based series of non-championship meets in August for athletes at the sectional level and above. We know there are still several challenges to be overcome to make these meets a reality, but as with our LSCs, we must all have a Plan B and a Plan C for competitions this summer.

If your club or LSC would like to work with staff to develop ideas for creating competition opportunities this summer, please reach out to Brendan Hansen, bhansen@usaswimming.org, or Tom Avischious, tavischious@usaswimming.org.

In addition to plan developments, many club leaders have reached out regarding insurance implications upon re-opening. Below is an explanation of the impact on the organization's insurance policy(ies).

There are two key requirements that insurers will seek in order for insurance to apply:

- Compliance with the most stringent and enforceable re-opening guidelines of your jurisdiction (i.e.: social gathering criteria) and;
- Continued compliance with USA Swimming guidelines such as coaching certification, safe sport provisions and virtual dryland practice guidelines.

Regarding the legal jurisdiction to follow where competing guidelines may apply, it is important to make a good faith decision of what the club believes is the proper and safe guideline. A local attorney should be consulted if there is ambiguity about which law or governmental authority should be followed.

There are two key insurance coverages provided as part of the USA Swimming membership. These include:

- General Liability insurance, which is silent on COVID-19. This means that the insurance company will be evaluating coverage on a case by case basis in the event a demand is made against the club from a third party. Other than COVID-19, any other standard claim (such as a slip and fall) should afford coverage.
- Participant Accident insurance, which provides payment for accidents/injuries above any healthcare costs. For this insurance, COVID-19 is specifically excluded as this is intended to cover for accidents only and not illness.

Should you have additional insurance questions, please reach out to USA Swimming Senior Director of Risk Management Steve Levine at slevine@usaswimming.org or 720-201-4685.

If you have any questions about sanctions or a return to practice, please email Joel Shinofield, jshinofield@usaswimming.org.

We encourage you to visit our website often for the most-up-to-date swimming community Coronavirus resources: <https://www.usaswimming.org/utility/swimming-community-coronavirus-resources>.

We thank you for your continued support.

Together, we will get through this.

Bob Vincent
USA Swimming Board Chair

Tim Hinchey III
USA Swimming President &CEO