**Relay Take-off Judge Protocols**

**Relay Take-off Judge – Ensures that a relay swimmer does not leave the starting platform before the preceding swimmer has touched the wall.**

**Position:**

The Referee or Chief Judge will assign each relay take-off judge their position.

1. One official is positioned on each side of the start end, looking across the start end of the pool. One next to starter, the other opposite at corners.
2. One official is positioned next to the starter, two judges are in the middle of the pool, facing out to the corners, and a fourth judge is on the opposite corner from the starter. All judges are observing half of the pool.
3. Other options may be selected pending meet needs and facility.

**Preparation:**

Mark your relay take-off slips with Event #, Heat # and sign your name. It is a good idea to cross out any empty or unassigned lanes.

**Observation:**

The judges should look ‘Toes to Touch’ to give the benefit of doubt to the swimmer. As soon as the swimmers’ toes leave the starting platform, look down to ensure that the touch has occurred.

As you are observing multiple lanes, it is a good idea to watch the field coming in, so you know which lanes are likely to touch first.

Once the exchanges are made, immediately mark your relay take-off slip without discussion or reviewing the other judges slip. O = Legal, X = Early take-off

**Reporting Violation:**

Only the Referee or assigned Relay Take-off judge can disqualify for an infraction of the relay take-off rule.

A Relay take-off judge does NOT indicate an observed early take-off with a raised hand. They only fill out the slip.

A dual confirmation of an early take-off is required. Relay take-off judges compare slips at the completion of the FINAL take-off exchange only.

**Legal Start Position:**

It is also important that the 2nd, 3rd and 4th swimmers start from a legal position on the block. The swimmer man not start from the top of the wedge; they must have at least part of one foot in contact with the starting platform in front of the wedge. This infraction requires that the judge raise their hand to indicate disqualification.