



## **Colorado Coaches and Colorado Officials**



# Purpose of this Course

- To be aware of clear and specific guidelines for impaired swimmers
- To advocate for and include all swimmers regardless of ability in meets
- To hold all swimmers accountable and to judge ability based on the rules
- To ensure that all athletes compete in a safe, inclusive environment
- To help the swim community—athletes, coaches, officials, meet directors and personnel, parents and clubs—promote a welcoming environment for all



## Overview

When an impaired swimmer enters a USA-sanctioned meet, they have the choice of being observed under **Article 105** of the *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations: Guidelines for Officiating Swimmers with a Disability in USA Swimming Meets*. There are 5 sections to this **Article**.

Many officials are unclear on how to observe impaired swimmers.



# The Official's Job

- Know the rules.
- Observe the swims.
- If (s)he observes something inconsistent with the rules, make a call.



# Protocol for Officiating an Impaired Swimmer

- USA Swimming neither requires nor recognizes sport classifications for swimmers with impairments.
- The swimmer or the swimmer's coach is responsible to notify the Meet Referee *1)* when a swimmer with an impairment is entered into a meet and *2)* what accommodations may be necessary.
- The Meet Referee makes any reasonable accommodation(s) for swimmer.
- The Meet Referee may relay this information to the on-deck officials.



# Protocol for Officiating an Impaired Swimmer

Each on-deck official

- observes the swims, and
- if (s)he observes something inconsistent with the rules, they make a call.

It is the responsibility of the Chief Judge or Meet Referee to vet any call from an official for a swimmer with a disability.



# USA-S Rule 105

## **105.1 General**

Responsibilities  
Referee  
Swimmer  
Modifications

## **105.2 Blind and Vision Loss**

Starts: 105.2.1  
Turns and Finishes: 105.2.2  
Relay Takeoffs: 105.2.3

## **105.3 Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

## **105.4 Cognitively Disabled**

## **105.5 Physical Disabilities**

Starts: 105.5.1  
Stroke and Kick: 105.5.2  
Turns and Finishes: 105.3  
Relays: 105.3.4



# USA-S Rule 105.2 Blind and Vision Loss







# USA-S Rule 105.2 Blind and Vision Loss

## *Starts: 105.2.1*

With an audible starting system, no modification is usually required for a swimmer who is blind or has vision loss. A swimmer may have assistance getting to and on the block. An in-the-water start is allowed.

## *Turns and Finishes: 105.2.2*

A swimmer is permitted to have personal assistants: *tappers* who use poles with soft-tipped ends to tap the swimmer to indicate a turn or the finish. Sound devices shall not be used. It is the swimmer's responsibility to provide the tapper(s), who shall be positioned within the confines of the swimmer's lane at the ends of the pool.



# **USA-S Rule 105.2 Blind and Vision Loss**

## *Relay Takeoffs: 105.2.3*

A physical touch may be required to signal a relay swimmer when their teammate has touched the wall. The specific technique can be tailored to the swimmer's preference as long as it does not aid the swimmer's take-off or interfere with the timing.



# USA-S Rule 105.3 Deaf and Hard of Hearing

## *Starts: 105.3.1*

Deaf or hard of hearing swimmers may require a visual starting signal: a strobe light or the Starter's arm signals (next slide). The Referee may reassign lanes within the swimmer's heat to accommodate a fair start.

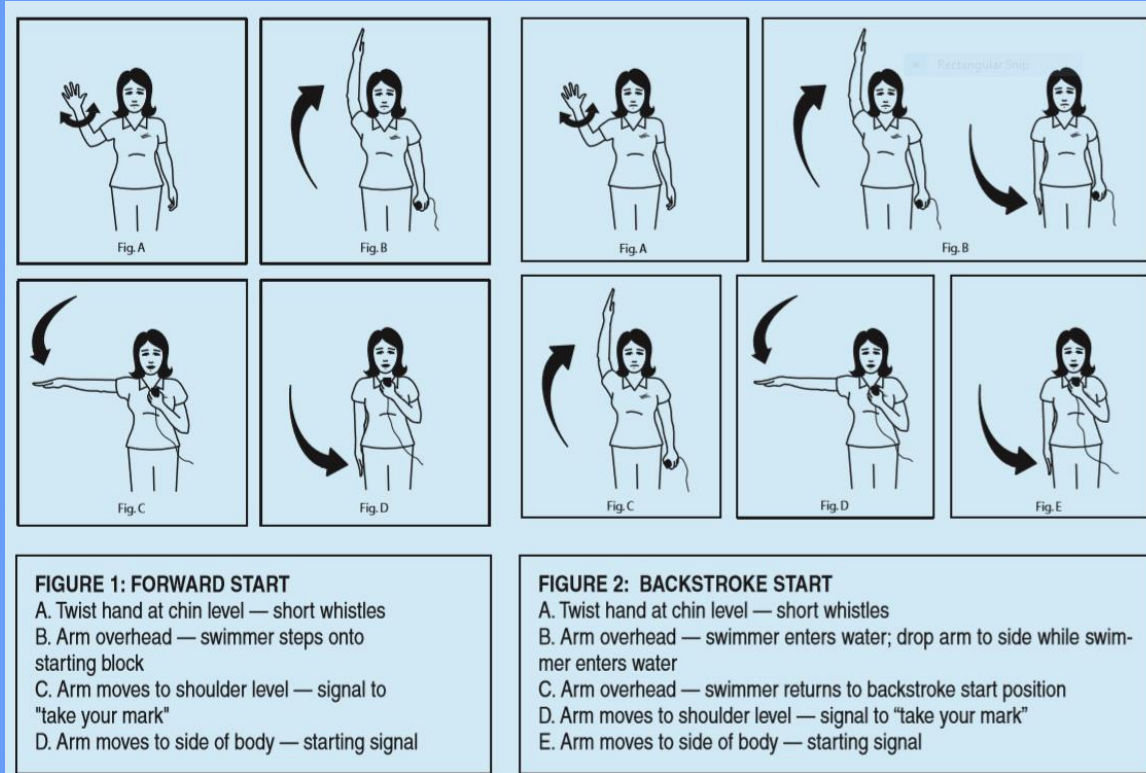
A false start rope is required in the event of a recall, provided the meet host is notified by the entry deadline that a deaf or hard of hearing swimmer will be participating.

## *Starts: 105.3.2*

The Starter shall advise the swimmer about the location of a strobe light. The strobe shall be located where the impaired swimmer can clearly see it for forward and backstroke starts. [Available from CSI: [CSISwimOffice@GMail.com](mailto:CSISwimOffice@GMail.com)]



# USA-S Rule 105.3 Deaf and Hard of Hearing





# USA-S Rule 105.4 Cognitively Disabled

## *105.4*

A swimmer may have an assistant on deck when necessary. The assistant does not need to be a member of USA Swimming.





# USA-S Rule 105.5 Physical Disabilities





# USA-S Rule 105.5 Physical Disabilities

## *Starts: 105.5.1*

Shall use a forward start for freestyle, breaststroke, and butterfly. For breaststroke and butterfly, after the start and after each turn, a swimmer who is unable to push off with their leg(s) may perform one arm stroke that need not be simultaneous or on the horizontal plane to attain position on the breast.

## *Stroke and Kick: 105.5.2*

If a body part is absent or cannot be used, it is not judged; if it is used during the stroke or kick, it should be judged in accordance with the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations. Judgments should be based on the actual rule, not on the swimmer's technique.



# USA-S Rule 105.5 Physical Disabilities

## *Turns and Finishes: 105.3*

At the turn(s) and finish of the butterfly, an athlete with no leg function is permitted to perform a partial stroke with the arm(s) recovering forward under the surface of the water in order to touch the wall.

## *Relays: 105.3.4*

A swimmer who cannot immediately exit the water may remain in the lane until all relays have finished as long as they do not interfere with the other swimmers or the timing equipment.





# **USA-S Rule 105.5 Physical Disabilities Rule Modifications or Accommodations**

*Starts for freestyle, breaststroke, and butterfly*

Assistance for the start, a longer time to assume the starting position on the block, on deck, or in the water

*Starts for backstroke*

One-hand grip, unable to grip, holding onto edge of pool, assistance or support staff



# USA-S Rule 105.5 Physical Disabilities Rule Modifications or Accommodations

*Arm length differences or the inability to use one or both arms*

- Arms not used during the stroke are not judged as part of the swim.
- If no arms or if the arms are too short to reach, the swimmer can touch with any part of the body.
- In breaststroke, if both arms are used, the arms shall be simultaneous, but not necessarily symmetrical.
- The longer arm must touch and the shorter arm must be pushed forward simultaneously.



# USA-S Rule 105.5 Physical Disabilities Rule Modifications or Accommodations

*Leg length differences or the inability to use one or both legs*

- The kick is judged based on the prescribed strokes. If a leg is not used, it is not judged.
- *Breaststroke*: if the legs are different lengths, but both legs are being used, the leg kick must be simultaneous, but not necessarily symmetrical. If the swimmer does not use the legs during the race, (s)he may take a partial stroke after the turn to realign the body on the horizontal plane for the swim.



# USA-S Rule 105.5 Physical Disabilities Rule Modifications or Accommodations

*Leg length differences or the inability to use one or both legs*

- The kick is judged based on the prescribed strokes. If a leg is not used, it is not judged.
- *Butterfly*: If the swimmer does not use the legs during the race, (s)he may take a partial stroke with the arm(s) recovering forward under the water in order to touch the wall.



# **USA-S Rule 105.5 Physical Disabilities Safety Considerations**

- Access to pool
- Entering or exiting the pool
- Mats
- Assistants or support staff
- Tappers for visually-impaired swimmers