



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

To: YMCA Swim Officials

From: Eddie Hughes, YMCA National Swim Officials Chair

Re: Interim YMCA Virtual Meets Guidance

Date: August 24, 2020

This memorandum includes important information for all Swim Officials.

Please read this memorandum carefully and retain it for future reference.

In response to the coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent restrictions placed on large gatherings, and the social distancing guidelines issued by various state and local authorities, YMCA Swimming has made interim provisions for virtual meets, in accordance with the current USA-S technical rules. Virtual meets allow teams to compete against each other but swim locally at their respective team location.

All rules for YMCA swimming competition, as outlined in the [Swimming Addendum to the Rules That Govern YMCA Competitive Sports](#), still apply in order for a meet's results to be recognized as valid, be included in the YMCA times database and, if approved by USA Swimming, be included in the SWIMS database. This includes, among other things, the minimum number of events offered, membership, and number of participants from each team.

All local and state health authority guidance must be followed in the conduct of any YMCA activity, including swim meets.

Set forth below are some guidelines for running YMCA virtual meets:

- **Meets Covered** – Meets can be a dual meet, a tri-meet or a larger invitational meet. In all cases, one team should be designated as the “home team” to gather and merge the results from the various locations. Note that [USA-Swimming](#) also provides for “intra-squad” meets, although times from such meets will not be valid for entry into higher level meets. Intra-squad meets will not count as one of the YMCA required closed competition meets for entry into higher level YMCA meets.
- **Approved Meets** – YMCA championship and large invitational meets which were granted approval by USA Swimming in the past, thus allowing the times to go into the USA-S SWIMS database, are eligible for the same approval if run in a virtual meet format which conforms to the guidelines published by USA-S.
- **Meet Format** – The meet format must be the same for all locations as to the events swum, age groups involved, etc., just as you would see at an in-person meet. For YMCA swim league meets, the events should follow your established local YMCA league format or the designated “home team” format. For other meets, you should follow the established practices you would have followed for an in-person meet.

- **Meet Date** – While it is expected that most meets will be conducted on the same day, this is not a requirement. A meet can be contested over a period of up to ten consecutive days (which would cover two weekends). Age for meet entry should follow your established YMCA swim league practices.
- **Timing Resolution** – The meet must be conducted at all sites following the timing requirements of [USA-S Rule 102.24](#). If one location for a virtual meet has fully automatic timing (touch pads) and the other location only has buttons or watches, each location should use the highest level of timing systems available at that location. It is important in these alternate meet arrangements that we preserve the integrity of the times going into the YMCA times database and SWIMS.
- **Timers** – [USA-S Rules 102.24.1D and 102.24.3C](#) require that each lane must have at least one manual timing device (watch), unless the primary system consists of watches. Placing these timers may take some consideration in order to comply with social distancing requirements.
- **Marshalling** - Depending on the pool and deck layout, you may have to consider marshalling swimmers in another part of the facility, like a gymnasium or large conference room.
- **Officiating Requirements** – Officiating at each site for a virtual meet must conform to [USA-S Rules 102.10.3-4](#). That is for a dual meet, each site must have a certified referee, a certified starter and a certified administrative official. In accordance with [YMCA policies](#), at least two of those officials must be YMCA certified, and one must be a YMCA Level II certified official who serves as the meet referee. For larger meets, the same requirements would hold for each individual site. While it is desirable that all teams have the same number of officials, ***if one team has more officials and their coaches want to use the additional officials***, then they should be utilized. The same holds true as to apprentice officials.
- **Entries** – For dual meets, entries should follow the established rules of the local YMCA swim league or the designated “home team” as to permitted numbers of events entered for each swimmer. For larger invitational and championship meets, entries must conform to [USA-S Rules 102,2.2-3](#).
- **Child Protection** – YMCA Child Protection Guidelines and applicable Safe Sport and Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies remain in effect for all activities and interactions

We will get through this! And, as always, thank you for all you do for YMCA competitive swimming!