

WHY BECOME AN OFFICIAL?

Swimming is one of the few youth sports that cannot run successfully without parent volunteers serving as officials. Every swim meet depends on trained officials to ensure races are conducted fairly, safely, and according to established rules.

By becoming an official, you will:

- **Support their swimmer and the entire team** by helping meets run smoothly and efficiently.
- **Gain a better understanding of the sport**, including stroke techniques, rules, and competition procedures.
- **Enjoy a front-row view of the action**, often from the pool deck rather than the spectator stands.
- **Help create a fair environment** where every athlete is judged consistently and objectively.
- **Develop new skills and friendships** with other parents, coaches, and officials in the swimming community.
- **Reduce the volunteer burden on a small group of parents**, ensuring the team remains sustainable and successful.

No prior swimming experience is required. Training programs are designed to teach parents everything they need to know, and new officials are paired with experienced mentors to help them learn and gain confidence.

Most importantly, volunteering as an official is one of the most meaningful ways to give back to the sport that provides so many opportunities for our children. Your involvement helps create a positive competitive experience for every swimmer and strengthens our entire swim community.

Remember: Every official started as a parent who simply decided to help. We encourage you to join us and make a difference on the pool deck!

BASIC STEPS TO BECOMING A NEW OFFICIAL

New officials start as either an Administrative Official or a Stroke and Turn Official.

To start the process of becoming a certified official, you must first register as a member of USA Swimming. You may initially register as an "apprentice official" or as a "non-athlete member" in the "official" category." Please note that not all LSCs offer the "apprentice official" registration option. Contact your [LSC Officials Chair](#) for specific guidance on how to register in your LSC.

Following registration, you will need to complete the following requirements to certify as an official.

- Complete the [Foundations of Officiating](#) course.

- Complete either the [Stroke & Turn Certification](#) course or the [Administrative Official Certification](#) course (to avoid the \$45 non-member fee, first register as an apprentice official or non-athlete member in the officials' category)
- [Complete a Background Check](#)
- [Complete Athlete Protection Training](#)
- [Complete Concussion Protocol Training](#)
- Complete on-deck sessions (4 minimum) shadowing a certified official

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