

PART 2: ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS OF COMPETITION

ARTICLE 201: MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

201.1 MEMBERSHIP OF INDIVIDUALS

All swimmers participating in events sanctioned by USMS must be members of USMS registered through their LMSC or members of their nation's recognized Masters swimming governing body.

201.1.1 Eligibility—Swimmers age 18 and over are eligible and may apply for membership in USMS.

201.1.2 Annual Membership—Individual membership is for the period January 1 through December 31 of each year. Swimmers applying for membership for the following year on or after November 1 shall be issued a membership card valid from the registration date through December 31 of the following year. Swimmers may register unattached or may affiliate with a club that is already registered for the same year for which the swimmer is registering.

201.1.3 One-Event Registration

A Open Water One-Event Registration—An LMSC may offer a single-event registration that allows an athlete to participate in a USMS-sanctioned open water event. Membership cards shall not be issued for one-event registration. One-event registrants must be considered unattached and agree to be governed by applicable USMS open water swimming rules and administrative regulations, except that their swims shall not be eligible for USMS national open water awards and recognition. One-event registrants shall be identified as such in the meet results.

B Pool One-Event Registration—An LMSC may offer a single-event registration that allows an athlete to participate in one event sanctioned by that LMSC. Membership cards shall not be issued for one-event registration. One-event registrants must be considered unattached and agree to be governed by the rules and regulations of USMS, except that their times shall not be considered for Top 10 tabulation and national or world records, All-American status or any other USMS special awards. One-event registrants shall be identified as such in the meet results.

201.1.4 Membership Application Forms

A Membership application forms—Individual membership application forms may be obtained from the registrar of the LMSC. The form, fully completed, shall be submitted with the applicable fee to the registrar of the LMSC or an official designee of the LMSC, who shall issue a membership card.

201.2

B Liability release—All membership application forms shall contain the exact language of the liability release according to article 204.1. The language shall not be modified in any way.

201.1.5 Fee—The annual membership fee and the one-event registration fee are composed of the following elements:

A A national fee established by the Board of Directors or the House of Delegates.

B A local fee established by the LMSC.

201.2 MEMBERSHIP OF CLUBS

Member clubs are organizations or groups of permanent character currently registered with USMS through its LMSCs and that actively promote and participate in Masters swimming.

201.2.1 Annual Membership—Annual membership for clubs is from the date of registration through December 31 of that year; however, a club applying for membership on or after November 1 will receive membership valid through December 31 of the following year.

201.2.2 Club Membership Forms—Membership forms for clubs may be obtained from the registrar of the LMSC. Renewal forms will be accepted October 1 for the next registration year. The completed form shall be submitted with the applicable fee to the registrar of the LMSC. The National Office shall issue a certificate of club membership.

201.2.3 Membership Fee—The annual membership fee is composed of the following elements:

A A national fee established by the Board of Directors or the House of Delegates.

B A local fee established by the LMSC.

201.2.4 Changing LMSC Affiliation—A club wishing to change its LMSC affiliation must approve such change by a majority vote of its general membership at a regular club meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose, with the vote duly certified by the club's president and secretary. The transfer also must be approved by a majority vote of the officers of the club's current and proposed LMSCs. If approved, the transfer shall be effective 60 days after receipt of written notice by the National Office.

201.3 REPRESENTATION

201.3.1 There shall be only one USMS membership per individual permitted at any time.

201.3.2 In order for a swimmer to compete as a representative of a club, that club must be a member in good standing of an LMSC and USMS for the year a swimmer is registering.

201.3.3 A swimmer shall register in the LMSC in which the club being represented is located. The swimmer need not reside within the LMSC territory.

201.3.4 An unattached swimmer is an individual member who does not represent a USMS club.

201.3.5 A swimmer shall not represent any club in competition for 60 consecutive days before transferring affiliation to another club, unless this transfer takes

place at the time of annual registration. A swimmer may declare unattached status at any time without written application.

- 201.3.6** All applications for changes of membership (including transfers) must be accompanied by a reasonable fee to be determined by USMS and the LMSC in which the swimmer will register for change of membership.

201.4 TRAVEL PERMITS

- 201.4.1** A USMS membership card shall serve as a valid travel permit.
- 201.4.2** Written permission to compete in a foreign country may be obtained from that country's national Masters swimming chair or the chair's designee.
- 201.4.3** Any foreign swimmers requesting an invitation to participate in USMS events may have such invitation extended only by the USMS president or the president's designee.

ARTICLE 202: SANCTION/RECOGNITION OF POOL EVENTS

202.1 SANCTIONS

Times achieved at sanctioned events are considered for USMS national records, USMS Top 10 times and FINA world records. All swimmers entered in sanctioned events shall be USMS members, or shall have valid travel permits or their equivalents, or shall have other acceptable proof of current Masters membership.

- 202.1.1 Sanction Requirements**—Sanctions shall be issued, withheld or withdrawn in accordance with the following:
- A** Applications for sanction shall be made to the LMSC within which the event is to be held, and applications shall be accompanied by a copy of the entry form and applicable fee.
 - (1)** The entry forms shall contain the language of the liability release as stated in article 204.1. The language may only be modified by naming the sanctioning LMSC, sponsoring USMS club(s) and/or additional insured(s) following "UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING INC." All swimmers, before participating, shall have signed the liability release.
 - (2)** Entry forms and programs must bear the statement "Sanctioned by (LMSC name) for USMS Inc. Sanction number: _____."
 - (3)** The sanction fee shall be established by the LMSC.
 - B** All sanctions shall be signed by the LMSC's authorized representative, and a record thereof shall be retained for two years.
 - C** Sanctions issued to one organization cannot be transferred to another. Any sanctions so transferred shall be void for all purposes, and the LMSC may deny further sanctions to any organization violating this provision.
 - D** No sanction may be issued to any organization whose interest in sports and games is purely commercial, or where the event is to be promoted solely for the profit or the advertising value to be derived therefrom. Any income derived from sanctioned events must be used for the general welfare of the promoting organization as a whole.

- E No sanction of any event shall be granted with the word “Olympic” or any derivative thereof used in any manner in connection with said event unless consent is obtained from the USOC.
- F All sanctioned events are subject to the following conditions:
- (1) The conduct of a sanctioned event shall be in strict compliance with applicable USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations, or when the sanctioned event is held simultaneously in conjunction with a USA Swimming sanctioned meet, with applicable USA Swimming rules and administrative regulations.
 - (2) In order to be in compliance with FINA rule C.7.2, an LMSC may grant exceptions to specific USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations when sanctioning a FINA Masters World Championship.
 - (3) Sanctioned events may include nonconforming swimming events so long as they are conducted in a safe manner. Nonconforming swimming events are events not defined in article 102.5 or that would typically result in the disqualification of participants as defined in article 102.13. USMS records and Top 10 times shall not be maintained in nonconforming events except for initial distances and relay leadoff split times for distances that are also events defined in article 102.5.
 - (4) Sanctioned events may be conducted in facilities not meeting the dimensional tolerance for required pool length, but the results of those events shall not count for USMS records and Top 10. It must be noted in the meet information that events conducted in these facilities are noncompliant.
 - (5) All swimmers shall submit with their entries copies of their current membership cards or travel permits, or supply proof of current Masters membership acceptable to the LMSC; however, at the discretion of the meet director and exclusive of national championship meets, a swimmer may enter indicating “number pending,” as long as proof of membership is presented prior to the swimmer’s participation in the event.
 - (6) A swimmer’s valid affiliation and age must be displayed after the name on the heat sheet or in the program.
- G A further sanction may be denied to any organization that has failed to conduct such event in accordance with applicable USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations, or as stated on the entry form.

202.2 RECOGNIZED EVENTS

Times achieved at recognized events shall be considered for USMS national records and Top 10 times if a designated USMS observer is present and verifies in writing that the conduct of the competition conforms to the relevant USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations. USMS membership is not required for swimmers entered in recognized events. Times achieved by USMS members at events sanctioned by USA Swimming shall be considered for USMS national records and Top 10 times without formal application for recognition. Times achieved by USMS members at events sanctioned by a FINA member federation shall be considered for USMS national records

and Top 10 times without formal application for recognition if the USMS member(s) register for the meet as USMS members. It is the responsibility of the swimmer to submit times obtained in recognized events with complete documentation to the appropriate LSMC Top 10 recorder and the Records and Tabulation Committee chair.

202.2.1 Recognition—Recognition shall be issued, withheld or withdrawn in accordance with the following:

- A** Application for recognition of events within the jurisdiction of USMS shall be made to the LMSC within which the event is to be held, and applications shall be accompanied by the recognition fee.
- B** All recognitions shall be signed by the LMSC's authorized representative, and a record thereof shall be retained for two years.
- C** Recognition issued to one organization cannot be transferred to another. Any recognition so transferred shall be void for all purposes, and the LMSC may deny further recognition to any organization violating this provision.
- D** No recognition may be issued to any organization whose interest in sports and games is purely commercial, or where the event is to be promoted solely for the profit or the advertising value to be derived therefrom. Any income derived from recognized events must be used for the general welfare of the promoting organization as a whole.
- E** The conduct of a recognized event shall conform to relevant USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations, including but not limited to, the following:
 - (1)** Articles 101 or Article 108 Starts, Strokes and Relays (Swimmers with a Disability)
 - (2)** Article 102.14.1 Swimwear Restrictions
 - (3)** Article 103.18.3 Timing Resolution
 - (4)** Articles 103.18.1, 103.18.2, 103.18.4, 103.18.5 and 103.18.7 Official Time
 - (5)** Articles 105.1, 105.2.1, 105.2.2A, 105.3.2, 105.3.6A and 105.3.8 Records and Top 10 Times
 - (6)** Articles 107.2.1, 107.2.3A, 107.3, 107.11.1, 107.11.2 and 107.13 Minimum Standards for Facilities
 - (7)** Relay leadoff split times that conform to articles 103.18.1 and 105.2.2A will be considered for events listed in article 102.5. USMS membership is not required for the other members of the relay team and the relay event itself need not conform to article 102.5.
- F** Further recognition may be denied to any organization that has failed to conduct said competition in accordance with applicable USMS swimming rules and regulations, or as stated on the entry form.
- G** Recognition for any meet held outside the jurisdiction of USMS, and

not sanctioned by a FINA member federation, shall be obtained from the Executive Committee.

202.3 FITNESS EVENTS

Fitness events are USMS events approved by the USMS Fitness Education Committee, LMSCs or clubs. Participants shall be USMS members or obtain one-event registrations to participate in these events. A fitness event shall be a sanctioned event or performed in an organized/supervised practice.

ARTICLE 203: OPEN WATER SANCTION

203.1 SANCTIONS

Swims achieved by USMS members at sanctioned events are considered for USMS open water national awards and recognition, provided a designated USMS observer is present and verifies in writing that the conduct of the competition conforms to the applicable USMS swimming rules and administrative regulations.

203.1.1 Sanction Options— USMS shall offer sanction options as defined below.

- A Standard USMS Sanction**—Open water events restricted to USMS members, one-event registrants and Masters swimming members of a FINA member federation. All swimmers entered shall be considered part of the same event and shall swim under applicable USMS open water swimming rules and administrative regulations.
- B Events Including Both USMS and USA Swimming Members**—USMS sanctioned open water event held in conjunction with a USA Swimming sanctioned open water event. USMS members shall swim under applicable USMS open water swimming rules and administrative regulations and USA Swimming members shall swim under applicable USA Swimming rules and administrative regulations. USMS athletes and USA Swimming athletes may swim at the same time on the same course. Athletes holding both USMS and USA Swimming memberships must declare their affiliation, in writing, prior to the start of the event.
- C Other Sanctions**—The Board of Directors, shall consider and may approve other sanction options recommended by the Long Distance Committee, with input from the Open Water Committee that allow the sanctioning of events that include USMS and non-USMS members

203.2 SWIMMER VERIFICATION

- 203.2.1** All swimmers entered in USMS sanctioned events as USMS members or Masters swimming members of a FINA member federation shall provide proof of current membership, acceptable to the LMSC. All other swimmers entered shall provide proof of USMS one-event open water registration.
- 203.2.2** All swimmers entered in USMS sanctioned events as members of non-FINA governing bodies shall have membership verification acceptable to their governing body.
- 203.2.3** At the discretion of the event director and exclusive of national championship events, a swimmer may enter indicating “number pending,” as long

as acceptable proof of membership is presented prior to the swimmer's participation in the event.

203.3 SANCTION REQUIREMENTS

203.3.1 Jurisdiction—The LMSC in which the event originates shall have jurisdiction in issuing the sanction. If any events are to be swum in more than one LMSC, the other LMSC(s) may also issue a sanction for the event. The sanction fee shall be established by the LMSC with jurisdiction.

203.3.2 Requirements—The following requirements shall be followed by the sanctioning LMSC and sanction applicant:

- A** LMSCs shall use the prescribed sanction application form without additional requirements.
- B** Applications for sanction shall be made to the LMSC with jurisdiction.
- C** Sanctions shall be signed by the LMSC's authorized representative, and a record thereof shall be retained for two years.
- D** The LMSC's authorized representative shall report the sanction to USMS.
- E** Sanctions issued to one organization cannot be transferred to another.
- F** No sanction of any event shall be granted with the word "Olympic" or any derivative thereof used in any manner in connection with said event unless consent is obtained from the USOC.
- G** When sanctioning a FINA Masters World Championship open water event, an LMSC may grant exceptions to specific USMS open water swimming rules and administrative regulations in order to be in compliance with FINA rules.
- H** Sanctioned events may include nonconforming swims so long as they are conducted in a safe manner.

203.3.3 Entry Forms and Programs

- A** The entry forms shall contain the language of the liability release as stated in article 204. The language may only be modified by naming the sanctioning LMSC(s), sponsoring USMS club(s) and/or additional insured(s) following "UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING INC." All swimmers, before participating, shall have signed the liability release.
- B** Entry forms and programs must bear the statement "Sanctioned by (LMSC name) for USMS Inc. Sanction number: _____."
- C** In the event of a dual sanction, entry forms and programs must identify the other sanctioning body.
- D** For competitive open water events that calculate individual scoring for place and/or club scoring, a swimmer's valid club affiliation and age must be displayed after the name in the program, if a program is published.

203.3.4 Results – Event directors shall submit official electronic results of the event to the LMSC's authorized representative.

203.4 WITHDRAWAL OR DENIAL OF SANCTIONS

- 203.4.1** Sanction may be denied to any individual or organization that has failed to conduct previously sanctioned events in accordance with applicable USMS open water swimming rules and administrative regulations, or as stated on the entry form.
- 203.4.2** Sanction may be denied to any individual or organization that has failed to demonstrate the ability or willingness to conduct the sanctioned events in accordance with applicable USMS open water swimming rules and administrative regulations.
- 203.4.3** Sanction may be withdrawn from any individual or organization failing to conduct the sanctioned events in accordance with agreed upon USMS open water swimming rules and administrative regulations and other stated requirements on the entry form.

**ARTICLE 204:
LIABILITY RELEASE****204.1 RELEASE**

All individual membership application forms and sanctioned entry forms shall include a liability release. The liability release shall be signed by the person registering or entering. The language of the membership release shall be:

“I, the undersigned participant, intending to be legally bound, hereby certify that I am physically fit and have not been otherwise informed by a physician. I acknowledge that I am aware of all the risks inherent in Masters swimming (training and competition), including possible permanent disability or death, and agree to assume all of those risks. AS A CONDITION OF MY PARTICIPATION IN THE MASTERS SWIMMING PROGRAM OR ANY ACTIVITIES INCIDENT THERETO, I HEREBY WAIVE ANY AND ALL RIGHTS TO CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES, INCLUDING ALL CLAIMS FOR LOSS OR DAMAGES CAUSED BY THE NEGLIGENCE, ACTIVE OR PASSIVE, OF THE FOLLOWING: UNITED STATES MASTERS SWIMMING INC., THE LOCAL MASTERS SWIMMING COMMITTEES, THE CLUBS, HOST FACILITIES, MEET SPONSORS, MEET COMMITTEES OR ANY INDIVIDUALS OFFICIATING AT THE MEETS OR SUPERVISING SUCH ACTIVITIES. In addition, I agree to abide by and be governed by the rules of USMS.”

- 204.1.1** The language of the entry release may be modified as described in article 202.1.1A(1).
- 204.1.2** For open water events, the following statement shall be added to the end of the release:
“Finally, I specifically acknowledge that I am aware of all the risks inherent in open water swimming and agree to assume those risks.”