

RULES COMMITTEE POLICY

Swimwear Exemption Procedures:

Following are the procedures for applying for an exemption to Article 102.12.1C regarding swimsuit design for medical or religious reasons in accordance with 102.12.1C(1)– (4):

1. Swimmers seeking exemptions to the USMS swimwear rules, article 102.12.1C, for medical or religious reasons shall submit a written request to the Chair of the USMS Rules Committee. The written request may be submitted via electronic mail.
2. The written request shall include either:
 - A. a detailed description of the medical condition for which the exemption is requested including:
 - i. the nature of the condition, the impact on the swimmer's daily life, impact to the swimmer's ability to participate in swimming workouts and competition, any current treatment and prognosis for the condition, and
 - ii. if requested, written confirmation from a licensed, practicing doctor/health professional,or shall include:
 - B. the religious denomination and
 - i. a detailed description of the religious restrictions affecting the clothing of the swimmer,
 - ii. its impact on the swimmer's daily life, and
 - iii. a written testamentary from the ordained/certificated religious leader/professional regarding the daily clothing practices of the swimmer.
3. For medical requests, the chair may consult with health care professionals as needed on the Sports Medicine Committee or outside of the Sports Medicine Committee, if registered with USMS, without divulging the names of those involved.
4. For religious requests, the chair may consult with religious experts.
5. In both cases, the chair may seek further information from:
 - A. the swimmer,
 - B. the swimmer's physician(s) and/or health care professional(s), if authorized by the swimmer.
 - C. the swimmer's religious leader/professionals, if authorized by the swimmer,

- D. religious experts,
 - E. coaches, or
 - F. officials involved in the case.
6. The chair may also consult with other knowledgeable parties if it is necessary to evaluate the request, including previous Rules Committee Chairs, the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations Chair, the USA Swimming Disability Swimming Chair, or others deemed to have subject matter expertise.
 7. Exemptions will be granted only for swimwear design including additional coverage or a separate garment or prosthesis under the swimsuit. An exemption for a zipper or other fastening device may be considered at the discretion of the Chair. A swimsuit or garment for which an exemption has been granted must be made from textile materials. No exemption will be allowed that will give the swimmer a competitive advantage.
 8. All exemptions will be assigned an expiration date or permanent status at the discretion of the Chair. The exemption will include the notice of permanent status or the expiration date and the assigned deadline to apply for renewal of the exemption. The swimmer is responsible for submitting another request beyond the expiration date.
 9. The chair may refer an exemption request to the USMS Rules Committee, as needed.
 10. Notification:
 - A. The chair shall give the swimmer and others, as appropriate, written notice of the decision regarding the exemption request.
 - B. The chair will share decisions rendered with the Officials Committee Chair, as appropriate.
 11. The swimmer is responsible for presenting a copy of the USMS exemption letter to the meet referee prior to the competition. The swimwear exemption letter presented to the meet referee at USMS-sanctioned meets must be that granted by USMS.

Updated September 13, 2019