



## Level 4 Application Instructions

Dear Applicant,

Congratulations on your decision to further your professional credentials by applying for Level 4 Certification!

The requirements for certification as a Level 4 coach are based on the areas of coaching that reflect the values of U.S. Masters Swimming. They are:

1. Contribution
2. Achievement
3. Growth & Retention
4. Leadership
5. Education
6. Extra Credit

For each category:

- there is a maximum number of points allowable toward total points
- there is a minimum number of points you must achieve in that category
- you must achieve points in at least two areas in each category

For each line item within a category:

- the **Maximum** column shows the maximum number of points in that area that the Coach is allowed to apply toward that category's total

### **Mandatory Pre-requisites for Level 4 Certification:**

1. Must be a USMS Level 3 Certified Coach
2. Must have at least 5 years of Masters coaching experience
3. Must hold current American Red Cross certification for either:
  - a. **CPR-AED AND Safety Training for Swim Coaches (STSC)/First Aid**
    - i. As of 2014 STSC now includes **First Aid**, which is also a Level 4 pre-requisite. If your STSC occurred before 2014, be sure and also submit your First Aid certification.
    - ii. Please note that STSC is a 2-part course – an online academic portion and an in-water skills portion. You must complete both! Connect up with an STSC instructor **before** signing up for any online portion as you may encounter a situation where you are charged twice for the course.
  - b. **Lifeguarding** (now required by many aquatic facilities)
4. Must earn a minimum of 650 total points on the Level 4 application
5. Regional (outside just your team and LMSC) and/or National contributions are required. This could be met by contributions in several categories. However, failure to meet this requirement, regardless of points achieved, will result in a deferred application.
6. Must be a Head Coach or Assistant Coach of your Masters team with significant responsibility in team operations (beyond coaching workouts). If an Assistant Coach, please have your Head Coach write a short letter that outlines the scope of services you provide as



an Assistant Coach with your Masters team. Coaches of workout groups will be considered. Applications will be awarded points based on the swimmers for which the applicant coach is the primary coach. Thus, if you coach 30 swimmers in your workout group, this is the group for which points can be awarded in the first 3 categories.

7. Letters from head coaches are helpful when multiple coaches apply for level 4 from the same club. Please do not take credit for participation of swimmers that rarely swim in your group, especially if they primarily swim with another applicant. Corroboration from team board and/or swimmers is helpful.
8. If you have any questions about any of the above requirements, please contact the coaches committee at [coaches@usms.org](mailto:coaches@usms.org).

The process to apply is outlined below and in the following pages. It is very important that you read through all instructions and return to those instructions when completing each section of your application, as these will guide you through what you need to submit as proof for the various categories and sub-categories.

Each application will be required to submit their completed package in a single PDF document (not a ZIP file). Included in that package should be the application scoring sheet where you fill in the score you believe that you have achieved. Proof of fulfillment in the various categories (outlined on the following pages) should then appear in the PDF document in the order of the application categories: Contributions, Achievement, Growth & Retention, Leadership, Education and Extra Credit. Submissions should be reflective of the professionalism expected of a level 4 coach, and should be able to stand up to public scrutiny. Supporting documentation should be relevant, clearly labeled as to which category and/or line-item it is supporting, and be purged of extraneous information that does not contain supporting documentation. The application should seek to impress the committee in content, clarity and professionalism.

The committee will use its discretion in determining how much credit is counted for each item based on documentation provided – any place where the committee feels insufficient documentation is presented, scoring will be adjusted accordingly. The points system is simply a starting point for the committee’s deliberation. If the committee determines that the applicant has scored sufficient points in each of the categories and in total, then the committee will use its combined wisdom, experience and knowledge to assess the applicant’s body of work to determine whether it reflects that of an elite coach. This part is not about the mechanical scoring of points but, rather, persuasive demonstration/documentation of that which puts the applicant on a substantially different, more involved level than others who have attained Level 3. We are looking for Level 4 candidates to clearly exhibit professionalism, to clearly exhibit excellence in the field of coaching adult swimmers and to clearly exhibit contributions to Masters Swimming as a whole.

Applications are submitted via email to [coaches@usms.org](mailto:coaches@usms.org) within the given submission dates. Incomplete, unethical, early and late applications will not be considered. Applicants failing to meet the pre-requisites will not be considered. Those not fulfilling these pre-requisites must wait until the next application submission dates and reapply.

If you need a PDF creation tool try one of these listed below. Many of these programs also allow you to reduce the size of the file so that it can be emailed. If candidates have a file too big to email, they can use Dropbox or another cloud storage solution. Simply email that cloud storage link to [coaches@usms.org](mailto:coaches@usms.org).

## *USMS Coaches Certification – Level 4 Application*



- Do a Google search for free PDF creators. Or, on the PC side try:  
<http://www.techsupportalert.com/content/best-free-pdf-tools.htm>.
- On the Mac side try:  
<http://www.igeeksblog.com/best-pdf-editors-for-mac-iphone-and-ipad/>
- There are also many free online PDF creators that are platform independent:  
<http://techpp.com/2009/06/07/top-10-free-online-pdf-creators/> OR  
<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/7-free-online-pdf-tools-save-lot-work/>
- Google Docs includes a “Download as PDF” tool for any document (even pictures).

Completed applications will be reviewed by a panel of coaches and measured against the standards set forth in the following pages. Your submission should be professional in appearance and assembled into a single PDF document that can be compressed in order to submit it by email. There are several free computer programs and websites online that enable you to easily put together a single PDF from your documentation and compress it.

Applicants will be notified of their status within a few weeks after the submission deadline closes.

If an application is deferred, the resubmitted application will be judged based on the new application date, and therefore the information submitted should be updated to ensure all dates fall within the timeframe allowed. This includes ensuring the required certifications are still current.

Thank you for all you do for our sport!

USMS Coaches Committee



## Cover Form

Please complete all of the information below

Name:				Date submitted:		
Address:						
City:				State:		Zip:
Phone:			Cell:			
Email:						
Years of <b>Masters</b> coaching experience:				Total Years Coaching:		
Team Name:				LMSC:		
<b>USMS Certification Dates</b>						
<b>Level 1:</b>	<b>Level 2:</b>			<b>Level 3:</b>		
American Red Cross training (list expiration date and attach copies of certification).						
<b>Safety Training for Swim Coaches or Lifeguarding</b>	<b>First Aid</b>			<b>CPR-AED</b>		

By my signature, I do hereby attest that everything that I've presented here is true and factual

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Head Coach or Board member if applicant is not head coach



## Instructions for Contributions Category

1. **Published Articles.** Copies of published articles can be scanned. It is okay to just scan the first page of a multi-page article as long as it shows the author, title, date, and the publication in which your article appeared and some of the body of your article.
  - a. Articles should be written by you, not about you.
  - b. Publications can be in any of the publications overseen by the National office, including, but not limited to any of the Streamlines and Swimmer Magazine, and the website. Zone newsletters and other publications may also be considered. Team emails and communications do not count.
  - c. This category also includes those who have served as designated online coaches providing workouts (for a calendar year) for USMS. If claiming this credit, please provide the year(s) and category of workouts you were responsible for creating.
  
2. **Host Masters Clinic in last 5 years.** Hosting of a Masters clinic event, or, one where you served as lead coach or assistant coach at another Masters team clinic or LMSC clinic (to include a clinic flyer or web announcement with dates and details of the clinic and number of participants).
  
3. **Host Masters Swim Meet or Open Water Event in last 5 years.** Served as host team of a USMS sanctioned Masters swim meet or USMS sanctioned open water event. Attach announcement flyer or web ad of meet or event to include the date.
  
4. **Formal Presentation in the last 5 years.** Formal speech or multi-media presentation given at ASCA World Clinic, USMS Convention or at a major regional, national, or large community event related to Masters swimming (such as your LMSC, the USMS High Performance Camp, SwimFest, etc.). Identify talk or presentation given (date, hours of presentation, place, type of event) and brief description of what and whom you presented to. Attach announcement flyer or web advertisement of event.



CONTRIBUTIONS	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
<b>1. Published Articles</b>	30	per article	120
At least two published articles in any of the following: USMS publications ( <b><i>SWIMMER Magazine, Streamlines, Streamlines for Volunteers, Streamlines for Coaches, or on the website</i></b> ), ASCA publications (American Swimming Magazine, ASCA Newsletter, Journal of Swimming Research). Swimming or swim-coaching content published in other <b>major</b> publications <b>may</b> be considered as well. Category also includes serving as one of the designated online coaches providing a year's worth of USMS workouts.	<i>Include proof for each article</i>		
<b>2. Host Masters Clinic in last 5 years</b>	40	per hosted event	120
Hosting of a Masters clinic event, or, one where you served as lead coach or assistant coach at another Masters team clinic or LMSC clinic (to include a clinic flyer or web announcement with dates and details of the clinic and number of participants)	<i>Include proof for each camp or clinic</i>		
<b>3. Host Masters Swim Meet or Open Water Event in last 5 years</b>	40	per hosted event	120
Served as host team of a <u>USMS sanctioned</u> Masters swim meet or <u>USMS sanctioned</u> open water event. Attach announcement flyer or web ad of meet or event to include the date.	<i>Include proof for each event</i>		
<b>4. Formal Presentation in last 5 years</b>	30	per presentation	60
Formal speech or multi-media presentation given at ASCA World Clinic, USMS Convention or at a major regional, national, or large community event related to Masters swimming (such as your LMSC)	<i>Include proof for each event</i>		
<b>Maximum allowable points for the Contributions category:</b>			<b>200</b>
<b>Your point totals</b>			
<b>Note:</b> You must achieve a minimum of 60 points in Contributions			

*Use the next page for any comments on the Contributions category (if needed)*

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*Use the below area for comments on the Contributions category (if needed)*

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## Instructions for Achievement Category

- 1. Team participation in USMS Events.** Team participation in USMS Fitness Events (Fitness Challenge Events, One Hour Swim, Check-Off Challenge, Go The Distance, or the Virtual Geographic Swim Series), USMS Postal Long Distance Events, USMS SwimFest Events, USMS National SCY or LCM Championships, USMS Open Water Nationals. Documentation would include rosters of participants and events by date/location. Team participation does not include your own participation in an event, and should reflect a substantial portion of registered club membership or group of swimmers for which you are their primary coach. Less than 5% does not constitute team participation! This category represents your ability to get team members involved in events.
- 2. Team Participation in Other Competitive Swim Events.** Do not include duplications of listings you took credit for in #1 above or #3 below. Please document meets and events with dates and rosters. Team participation does not include your own participation as a competitor, and should reflect a substantial portion of registered club membership or group of swimmers for which you are their primary coach. Less than 5% does not constitute team participation! This category represents your ability to get team members involved in competitions.
- 3. Traveling team participation in an event 100 miles or farther from your team pool.** Team participation in a swim clinic or swim competition more than 100 miles from the team's home pool and requiring an overnight stay. Should be a separate event from the above 2 categories and can include non USMS events. Team participation does not include your own participation, and should reflect a substantial portion of registered club membership or group of swimmers for which you are their primary coach. Less than 5% does not constitute team participation! This category represents your ability to get team members involved in events.





ACHIEVEMENT	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
<b>1. Team Participation in USMS events (over last 3 years)</b>	20	per event	120
Team participation in USMS Fitness Events (Fitness Challenge Events, One Hour Swim, Check-Off Challenge, Go The Distance, or the Virtual Geographic Swim Series), USMS Postal Long Distance Events, USMS SwimFest Events, USMS National SCY or LCM Championships, USMS Open Water Nationals.	<i>Include listing of events and rosters of swimmers</i>		
<b>2. Team Participation in <u>Other</u> Competitive Events (last 3 years) – team members, not you, the coach AND events not used in #1 above or #3 below</b>	Varies		80
<b>1-5 events</b> in past 3 years = 20 points <b>6-10 events</b> in past 3 years = 40 points <b>11-15 events</b> in past 3 years = 60 points <b>16 or more events</b> past 3 years = 80 pts	<i>Include listing of events and rosters of swimmers</i>		
<b>3. Traveling Team Participation (last 3 years) events not used in #1 or #2 above</b>	20	per event	40
Team participation in a <u>swim clinic</u> or <u>swim competition</u> more than 100 miles from the team's home pool and requiring an overnight stay. Must be a separate event from the above 2 categories and can include non USMS events.	<i>Include listing of events and rosters of swimmers</i>		
<b>Maximum allowable points for the Achievement category:</b>			<b>200</b>
<b>Your point totals</b> <b>Note: You must achieve a minimum of 60 points in Achievement</b>			

*Use the next page for any comments on the Achievement category (if needed)*

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*Use the below area for comments on the Achievement category (if needed)*



## **Instructions for Growth & Retention Category**

Applicants should contact their LMSC registrar to obtain the required proof for 1-3 of this section.

1. **Club Growth.** Increase in membership by > 5% per year in previous three year period. Please provide the membership numbers for the years in the time frame.  
e.g. 2012 – 40, 2013 – 59, 2014 – 72
2. **Overall retention rate of greater than 80% from prior year** (in a 3 year period). List the numbers of retained (returning) swimmers.  
e.g. 2012 – 34 (of 40), 2013 – 49 (of 59), 2014 – 58 (of 72)
3. **Signed up a swimmer that has never ever been registered with USMS.** 10 points per swimmer; maximum credit of 6 swimmers (60 points). List names and USMS numbers for the swimmers.
4. **Started a new USMS registered club in the last five years.** List the team(s) and year launched. Rebranding a team or relocating swimmers to a new group will not be considered.



GROWTH & RETENTION	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
<b>1. Increase membership &gt; 5% over the preceding year</b>	40	per year	120
in any of the last three years - information available from your LMSC registrar	<i>Obtain from LMSC</i>		
<b>2. Retention rate of &gt; 80% from the prior year</b>	40	per year	120
in any of the last three years - information available from your LMSC registrar	<i>Obtain from LMSC</i>		
<b>3. Sign up someone who has never been a registered USMS swimmer</b>	10	per swimmer	60
in any of the last three years - information available from your LMSC registrar	<i>Obtain from LMSC</i>		
<b>4. Start a new USMS Club from scratch</b>	30	total	30
in any of the last five years	<i>List club &amp; year</i>		
<b>Maximum allowable points for the Growth &amp; Retention category:</b>			<b>200</b>
<b>Your point totals</b> <b>Note:</b> <i>You must achieve a minimum of 80 points in Growth &amp; Retention</i>			

*Use the next page for any comments on the Growth & Retention category (if needed)*

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*Use the below area for comments on the Growth & Retention category (if needed)*



## **Instructions for Leadership Category**

1. **Service as a volunteer on either a USMS National Committee/Task Force or service as an LMSC officer during the past 5 years.** Documentation of your position and dates of service are required. Team liaison to the LMSC board is not considered an officer position for the purposes of this application.
2. **Served as a coach at Regional/National Swim Clinic or Swim Camp during the past 5 years.** Regional is defined as more than just your own LMSC. To claim points for a regional clinic, it needs to be significant contribution (not one local in a series of clinics). Please submit dates and locations as well as a brief description of duties. Include a flyer or web announcement.
3. **Teaching Coaching CEUs during the past 5 years.** Teaching the USMS Coach Certification Courses Levels 1, 2 or 3 or teaching of USMS Coaches Continuing Education Courses. List dates, locations and attach web advertisement or announcement flyer on the course. Teaching ALTS, while a USMS program, does not count for points in this category. Points for ALTS certification and instruction may be considered in the extra credit category.
4. **Masters Coach Mentor within the last 5 years.** Please provide the name(s) of any coaches you have mentored. Please have them send a dated statement or letter of support describing how you have helped them develop as a coach directly to the application email. They should include your name and date at the top. These coaches should be coaches from team(s) other than your own. Coaches under your supervision or USA/USAT coaches connected with your club will not be considered.



LEADERSHIP	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
<b>1. Service as a volunteer on a USMS National Committee or service as an LMSC Officer</b>	Varies	Credit for each year on each committee or TF	100
Service during the past 5 years:			
– Serving as LMSC Coaches Chair.....	...25		
– Serving as LMSC Chair.....	...50		
– Serving on LMSC (other than as Chair or Coaches Chair).....	...25		
– Serving on a USMS Committee.....	...50		
– Serving as Chair of a USMS Committee or Task Force .....	...100		
<b>2. Coach at a Regional or National Swim Camp</b>	25	each camp	100
Clinics/Camps during the past 5 years	<i>Dates, Location, Duties</i>		
<b>3. Teaching Coaching CEUs past 5 years</b>	25	each assignment	100
Teaching USMS Coaches Training such as Level 1-3, or USMS Coaches Continuing Education Courses	<i>Dates, Location, Flyer</i>		
<b>4. Masters Coach Mentor in the last 5 years (letters of support required)</b>	25	each mentorship	100
	<i>Dated letters from coaches</i>		
<b>Maximum allowable points for the Leadership category:</b>			<b>250</b>
<b>Your point totals</b>			
<b>Note: You must achieve a minimum of 125 points in Leadership</b>			

*Use the next page for any comments on the Leadership category (if needed)*



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## **Instructions for Education Category**

1. **Coaching CEUs in the last 3 years.** Continuing coaches education at in-person workshops (not online) which can be from USMS, ASCA or any other nationally recognized swimming organization such as USA Swimming or USAT (if swim specific). Please provide dates, location, topics and presenter and receipt or proof of your attendance. Your attendance at USMS Level 1, 2 & 3 does not qualify for educational points, as those are core requirements for Level 4. ALTS certification will not be considered in this category, but may be considered in extra credit. In order to qualify for credit, topics should be pertinent to Masters Swimming.
2. **Workshop Participation in the last 3 years** at the USAS-USMS Annual Convention, or the ASCA World Clinic or USMS Coaches Continuing Education Training. Please provide documentation of workshops attended to include the workshop title, date and presenter.
3. **Online Coaching CEUs in the last 3 years.** Online training from ASCA, USA Swimming, USMS or other national recognized swim organization and where such training is specific to Masters Swimming. For example, general topics such as nutrition, energy systems, USRPT, etc., would qualify. Videos should be at least 30 minutes in length. Please provide any documentation, such as link and notes taken to show completion of such online training.



EDUCATION	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
<b>1. Coaching CEUs in the last 3 years</b>	25	per workshop	150
Points earned from attending in person clinics from USMS, ASCA or other <b>nationally recognized</b> swim organizations such as USA Swimming	<i>See instructions for proof requirements</i>		
<b>2. Workshop Participation at the USAS-USMS Annual Convention or the ASCA World Clinic (in the past 3 years)</b>	25	per workshop	150
Please provide documentation of workshops attended to include the workshop title, date and presenter.	<i>Please include</i> ☐		
<b>2. Online Coaching CEUs in the past 3 yrs</b>	10	per workshop	50
Online training from ASCA, USA Swimming, USMS or other national recognized swim organization. Such training must be specific to Masters swimming.	<i>See instructions for proof requirements</i>		
<b>Maximum allowable points for the Education category:</b>			<b>300</b>
<b>Your point totals</b>			
<b>Note:</b> You must achieve a minimum of 100 points in Education			

*Use the next page for any comments on the Education category (if needed)*

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## Instructions for **Extra Credit** Category

This section is to allow for additional achievements that may not fit in any of the previous categories in the application. This includes additional education, contributions, etc., for consideration. Show us what you've done and tell us what impact it has had on you and the Masters swimming community. As with all other categories, you should elaborate and provide documentation that sells the worthiness for what you want credit. Corroboration of what you have done or in what you have participated will be required. This category cannot compensate for a shortfall in any given category. Applicants must achieve the minimum point total in every category.

EXTRA CREDIT		MAXIMUM
<p><b>1. This section is where other creditable achievements (such as non swimming specific education, contributions, etc.) that may not “fit” in any of the previous categories can be considered.</b></p>		100
<p>Such as...publishing a book on swimming, producing and marketing a swimming video (or YouTube channel), inventing and bringing to market a swim training tool, taking formal coaching related college courses, producing a weekly swimming podcast, or coming up with some new and novel way to expand or improve the adult swimming universe. Show us what you've done and tell us what impact it has had on you and/or the Masters community.</p>	<p><i>Use the next page to talk about the other ways you have contributed to our adult swimming community. Present documentation to support these achievements and / or contributions.</i></p>	
<p><b>Maximum allowable points for the Extra Credit category:</b></p>		<b>100</b>
<p><b>MAXIMUM GRAND TOTAL OF POINTS</b></p>		<b>1250</b>
<p><b>Your points tallied from above</b>  <b>Note:</b> You must achieve a minimum of 650 total points for Level 4 status.</p>		

*Use the next page for any comments on the Extra Credit category (if needed)*

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*Use the below area for comments on the Extra Credit category (if needed)*