

USMS Officials Committee 2026

Committee Name:	Officials Committee	Session #:	3
Committee Chair:	Omar de Armas	Vice Chair:	Teri White
Minutes recorded by:		Date/time of meeting:	5/28/2026 5:00 PM PST

Motions Passed:

1.

Number of committee members present: **Absent: 1** **Number of other members present: 1**

Committee members present (list all, including chair and vice chair): Omar de Armas Chair; Virgil Chancy; Emily Cook; Daniel Cox; Rob Duguay; JoAnn Faucett; John Fox; John King; Alina de Armas; Thomas Murphy; Ed Stranc; Teri White, Vice Chair; Cindi Wood; Carrie Stolar, Ex;

Committee Members Absent: Brendan Clark-Griffin; Onshalee Promchitmart, Ex.

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 5:05 PST.

Approval of Agenda. M/S/C

Approval of previous meeting minutes. Approved via email

Introductions and Announcements

Meeting called to order at 5:01 PM PST. Agenda and prior meeting minutes were approved (M/S/C). Meeting adjourned at 6:10 PM PST.

Key Update: Transgender Athlete Policy & Litigation

- An organizational leader provided an update on ongoing litigation and explained that meet policies will follow applicable public accommodation and non-discrimination requirements based on meet location.
- For Spring Nationals and future meets, local jurisdictional rules will govern participation and recognition; national program time recognition may differ from local meet awards depending on policy constraints.
- Committee members raised questions about award categories and a contact pathway for policy questions; the group reiterated that determinations should not be made on-deck and should be handled through registration/eligibility processes.
- Participants will acknowledge the policy as part of pre-meet communications.

Old Business

Officials Certification Program

- Credential milestone: 599th credential card issued; program nearing 600 total officials.
- Program composition reported: 343 starters, 18 administrative officials, and 180 referees.
- Referees will not be certified as Administrative Officials (AOs) until they complete the applicable AO test.
- New sanction process requires the meet referee to be on the USMS list (not only USA Swimming/other organization lists).

- Referee cards are being issued frequently to support meet sanction requirements.

National Championship Meets

- **Open Water National Meet (Sarasota, FL; Apr 3–4):** Event reported as successful overall with 300+ swimmers; staffing challenges occurred due to schedule conflicts among some officials. The committee discussed creating an application process to officiate Open Water Nationals to support staffing. Coordination with the long-distance group will continue, with the committee maintaining jurisdiction over official assignments while long-distance handles rulings.
- **College Club Championships (Greensboro, NC; Apr 10–12):** Reported staffing plan included 32 officials plus the meet referee. Meet uses two pools for prelims and one pool for finals; event sold out. Structural changes for next year were discussed (more similar to USMS Nationals), including facility coordination changes and budget constraints impacting the ability to reimburse a large number of officials.
- **Spring Nationals (Greensboro, NC; Apr 30–May 3):** Application closed to travelers; 38 officials plus team leads registered. Facility provided 30 complimentary hotel rooms; organizers planned to ask applicants to shift reservations to the complimentary inventory. USMS will not pay for additional hotel rooms when complimentary rooms are available, but may reimburse non-cancellable commitments (e.g., certain rentals).
- **Summer Nationals (Sacramento, CA; Aug 5–9):** Meet leadership roles and anticipated committee attendance were discussed; administrative referee coverage was requested.

Other Topics & Subcommittee Work

- **Officials at nationals/international meets:** A subcommittee will address the requirement for referees to be USMS members in sanction applications and develop written policies for staffing and managing officials at national meets, including reimbursement policies and requirements.
- **Policy handbook:** Work will begin to consolidate information currently dispersed across the website into a single resource; website duplication/confusing navigation issues were noted, and a website review/restructure effort will proceed.
- **Mentoring process for new officials:** The group will review and update the referee self-training guide, examine the administrative official training program, and develop mentoring initiatives; regional differences in training expectations were discussed.
- **Testing transition:** Test management handoff is underway; tests have been updated based on the 2026 rulebook (Appendix updates noted).
- **Session tracking:** Proposed meet tracking approach uses a cloud-based, self-reporting model; concerns about accuracy were acknowledged, with an honor-system approach discussed. Integration options and a year-by-year tracking structure were suggested.
- **Officials award:** Award program is moving forward; nomination handling and photo collection process were discussed to ensure nominations are not blocked by missing photos and winners can provide preferred photos.
- **Adoption of College Club and Open Water:** Committee supports formal adoption of both programs under the committee umbrella. Next steps include developing applications to officiate, coordinating with Events, and exploring reimbursement expansion subject to budget constraints and potential approvals.

Action Items (Anonymized)

- **Rules & policy research:** Research written open water rules regarding swimming-to-finish-line requirements.

- **Website/policy handbook:** Continue website review and restructuring; initiate work to consolidate scattered website information into a policy handbook resource.
- **Nationals staffing & reimbursement policies:** Develop written policies for officials management at national meets (including staffing procedures); document current reimbursement practices; create clear reimbursement requirements and policies.
- **Meet tracking system:** Move forward with developing a cloud-based meet tracking system; collaborate with an Excel expert on system design; coordinate on potential data integration from past nationals.
- **Training & mentoring:** Review/update referee self-training guide; examine administrative official training program; develop mentoring program initiatives.
- **Testing:** Continue test management and future updates.
- **Awards:** Continue managing the officials award program; contact nominees to solicit preferred photographs; promote award nominations.
- **College Club/Open Water adoption:** Coordinate with Events on College Club Swimming; develop an application-to-officiate process; explore reimbursement options within budget constraints.

Next meeting: July 21, 2026, 5:30 PM PST / 8:30 PM EST