

NVSL SWIMMING AND DIVING RULE TERMINOLOGY & DEFINITIONS

Terminology and definitions are incorporated by reference in the NVSL Bylaws and in the Swimming and Diving Rules as appropriate. It is recommended that the Rules along with Terminology & Definitions be reviewed by officials prior to every meet.

Bid-in -to fill an unoccupied lane, using procedures of *Rule 6*.

Course - designated distance over which the competition is conducted.

Division Coordinator - An individual selected to: **1)** be the liaison between a division and the NVSL; **2)** oversee the teams in NVSL sponsored events; **3)** manage divisional meets; **4)** serve as a member of the NVSL Board.

Entry - listing of a swimmer in an event.

Entry list irregularity - listing of a swimmer who is ineligible to compete because of age, membership requirements, exceeding the number of entries permitted each swimmer in a meet, or because of improper substitution.

Event - any race or series of races in a stroke, distance and age group.

Family - (eligibility Rule 2a) includes only natural children, adopted children, foster children, foreign exchange students and blood relatives who are living in the household continuously for at least two months. "Foreign exchange students" are foreign citizens who are temporarily in the U.S. and have been placed in homes by organizations known for and engaged in placement of foreign exchange students. "Foster children" are individuals who are so designated by and have been placed in homes by organizations known for and engaged in foster child placement.

Lane - area of the pool in which the swimmer is assigned to compete.

Leg (relay) - the part of a relay event that is swum by one team member.

Length - extent of the course from end to end.

May - permissive, not mandatory.

Scratch - to withdrawing a swimmer from an event.

Seed - distribute the swimmers among the required number of heats and/or lanes using their submitted times in conformance with USA Swimming Rules for timed finals competition.

Shall - mandatory.

Should - suggested, strongly encouraged, but not mandatory.

Substitution - replacement of one swimmer with another in an event.

Swimming and Diving Up - Swimming in an age group older than one's own.

Team Meets - dual and triangular meets.

ALL PERSONS PARTICIPATING IN THE LEAGUE'S PROGRAM SHOULD
REMEMBER THE PURPOSE OF THIS LEAGUE:

*"...to develop in the children participating in this program—a love for the sport,
advanced aquatic skills, teamwork, and the principles of good sportsmanship."*

It is recommended that the League Swimming Rules and
Terminology/Definitions be reviewed by all Officials prior to every meet.

Always refer to the Terminology/Definitions to further understand the rules.

*****PLEASE REFER TO MYNVSL.COM DOCUMENT FOLDER "2021 SEASON SPECIFIC GUIDANCE"
FOR MODIFIED RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR 2021*****

NORTHERN VIRGINIA SWIMMING LEAGUE RULES FOR SWIMMING COMPETITION

1. GENERAL

a. These rules apply to closed meets in privately owned pools and shall govern the conduct of all swimming meets scheduled, sponsored, or sanctioned by the Northern Virginia Swimming League (the "League").

b. All persons involved with the League—swimmers, Coaches, League Board Members, Team Representatives (Team Reps), Officials, parents and spectators—shall adhere to the Standards of Conduct as published in the NVSL Handbook. If any such person violates the Standards of Conduct during an NVSL meet, a Team Rep may file a protest as set out in **Rules 14b and 14c**. Sanctions, including suspension(s) may be imposed pursuant to **Rule 14b(5)**. Engaging in conduct set out below constitutes a *per se* violation of the Standards of Conduct: (i) trespassing on or damaging the property of any NVSL pool; (ii) setting off any incendiary devices at any time at any NVSL pool property on the day of an NVSL meet – except OFFICIAL July 4th fireworks hosted by the pool; (iii) any depiction of personal injury or death directed at Team Reps, Coaches, swimmers or team mascots. These illustrative examples of unacceptable conduct are not intended to be exhaustive.

c. The Referee, Meet Managers, and/or Division Coordinator (only if on-scene at the Meet) have the authority to resolve disruptive or unsportsmanlike activity. Nothing in this Rule shall abridge the Referee's duties as delineated in **Rule 10e**.

d. The USA Swimming Rules pertaining to the strokes, disqualifications, duties of Officials, judging, timing and similar technical matters shall be observed at all League meets unless modified by these rules. Guidelines distributed at the clinics **are unofficial**, but familiarity with them is encouraged.

e. It is not the purpose of these rules to set standards of care for swimmer safety. Safety considerations should be addressed by the swimmers and the community pool organizations where the meets are held.

f. The starting time for all meets except relay carnivals shall be 9:00 a.m. unless another starting time is pre-approved by the Division Coordinator and either the President or the Vice President for Swimming, or unless there are safety reasons which reasonably justify rescheduling. The time to start a rescheduled team meet or to resume an interrupted team meet shall be determined by agreement of the Team Reps of the competing teams.

g. All meets shall be held in the scheduled pools unless there are extenuating circumstances and relocating the meet to another NVSL pool is approved by the Division Coordinator and the Team Reps of the competing teams.

h. League swimming meets should not be on Tuesdays at times which conflict with League diving meets published in the League Handbook.

i. Teams shall report at the host pool not later than 30 minutes before the meet is scheduled to begin and shall proceed immediately to their assigned areas. When directed by the Announcer, swimmers may take a short warm-up swim after which they shall return to their assigned areas. When called, swimmers shall report immediately to Clerk of Course. (See **Rule 5(a)(2)** about submitting Scratches and Substitutions.)

j. Coaches, swimmers and spectators shall be strictly controlled; and reasonable measures shall be taken to ensure that they do not interfere with officials in the performance of their duties. Only Team Reps designated under **Rule 10b.** may consult the Referee, but not while an event is in progress. The Team Reps shall be readily available to the Referee at all times during the meet.

k. All swimmers shall report to Clerk of Course prior to their events. Once there, they shall not receive coaching or assistance. Allowing the backstroke swimmers to secure a handhold on the legs of other persons (only below the knees) for starting or placing towels on the pool edges for starting shall not be construed as coaching or assistance.

l. No event will be delayed pending the arrival of a swimmer.

m. If a team meet is postponed, no results other than the final scores shall be posted (on internet, pool sites, etc.) until **ALL** the division's meets scheduled for that date are completed.

n. If any events of an All-Star Meet cannot be swum on the date originally scheduled, the events shall be canceled and not rescheduled. Awards (but not points) for any events not swum shall be made based on the meet's final seeding. Team trophies for the All-Star Relay Carnival shall be awarded based on the results of completed events but shall not be awarded unless at least 12 events have been swum.

o. Swimmers shall not be permitted to compete in swim caps which include the name or insignia of any team other than their NVSL team.

p. A factor of 1.10 shall be used to convert yard to meter times. In converting meter to yard times, a factor of 0.91 shall be used.

2. POOL AND COMPETITOR ELIGIBILITY

a. Eligibility of pools and competitors to participate in League activities are defined by the League Bylaws.

Article III - Membership

"A. Pool Eligibility. Bona fide community pools in Northern Virginia shall be eligible for membership in the League. Community (NVSL) pools are non-profit swimming organizations, in which members own at least one *pro rata* share of the assets of such organization or, in the judgment of the Board of Directors, are the successors in interest to the full use of privileges of the owners of at least one *pro rata* share of such assets. Such ownership may also be as a member of a Homeowners Association or other legal entity which owns the pool assets and is controlled by homeowners in the community served by the pool.

Article IV – Competitor Eligibility

“An athlete whose Family has a *bona fide* membership at an NVSL pool, established by the pool bylaws or other governing documents, shall be eligible to compete for that pool in League activities.

“A. An athlete whose Family has more than one *bona fide* NVSL pool membership is eligible to swim for only one pool and to dive for only one pool during each season. League Rules Committees may, for good cause shown, grant an exemption to permit a family to swim or dive at a second pool during the current season.

“B. An athlete with individual swimming privileges at an NVSL pool, rather than Family swimming privileges, shall not be eligible to compete for that pool in League activities.

“C. An athlete whose Family membership at an NVSL pool does not provide dive competition may dive for an NVSL pool that provides such competition pursuant to its pool rules for dive team participation.

“D. Transparency - Any and all decisions on determination of eligibility issued by the League Rules Committee under this Article shall be made available in their entirety upon the request of any Member Pool Team Representative.”

b. The eligibility of a swimmer to compete in an age group shall be determined by his or her age on June 1 of the current year.

(1) The uppermost age group shall consist of persons 15, 16, 17, and 18 years of age.

(2) Each team shall maintain an up-to-date list of its swimmers, with applicable birth dates for ready reference in case of eligibility disputes.

c. In team meets, except for the mixed age relay, swimmers may compete in their own and/or higher age groups. They may enter up to two individual events provided no stroke is repeated. They may compete in both the mixed age relay and one age group relay.

d. In the Division Relay Carnival, Divisionals and All-Star Meets swimmers may compete only in their own age groups. In these meets, competitors shall not enter more than two age group relays or more than two individual events.

3. LIMITATIONS ON ENTRIES

a. Team Meets

(1) Individual Events - In dual meets, each team may enter not more than three swimmers in each individual event. In tri-meets, each team may enter not more than two swimmers in each individual event.

(2) Relay Events - Each team may enter only one official team in each relay event. Each team may enter unofficial teams swimming in the same race and strokes provided they are not adjacent to the opposing team's lane and do not interfere with the conduct of the meet. Swimmers in unofficial relay teams shall meet the age and sex requirements of the official relay teams in the event. The performance of an unofficial relay team shall not count in the scoring. An infraction by any unofficial relay team shall not cause the disqualification of an official relay team

b. Divisionals (Included in *Rule 6b.*)**c. All-Star Meets**

(1) All Star Relay Carnival - Relay teams which achieve the eighteen fastest times League-wide at the Division Relay Carnivals shall be eligible to compete in the same event in the All-Star Relay Carnival. One alternate team shall be listed in the program for each event and shall report to Clerk of Course to swim in any lane which is or becomes unoccupied due to a false start or any other reason.

(2) Individual All Stars - Swimmers who achieve the eighteen fastest times League-wide at Divisionals shall be eligible to compete in the same event in the Individual All-Star Meet. Two alternates shall be listed in the program for each event and shall report to Clerk of Course to swim in lanes which are or become unoccupied due to false starts or any other reasons.

(3) When there is a tie for the eighteenth fastest time an extra heat shall be swum. If available, more than six lanes may be used to reduce the number of heats swum.

4. ENTRY LISTS FOR TEAM MEETS

a. Each team shall prepare one list marked as the "Firm Entry List" containing the first and last names of each swimmer. These lists shall be exchanged by designated Team Reps of the competing teams at a mutually agreeable time not later than 24 hours prior to the time of the meet. This exchange shall occur at the host pool or at a mutually agreeable location, unless the competing designated Team Reps agree to and conduct an electronic exchange of Firm Entry Lists that is simultaneous or sent via an independent third party. If an electronic exchange of Firm Entry Lists is conducted, the lists shall be in read-only format (e.g., pdf) and the host pool shall make them available for review prior to the meet start. Other computer files may be exchanged, but the Firm Entry Lists shall be the official lists for all meet entry purposes.

b. Firm entry lists shall be prepared and exchanged in good faith. Fictitious swimmers shall not be entered. Faster swimmers expected to compete shall not be left off the firm entry list.

*Note: the names of faster or fastest swimmers should be entered even when their participation is doubtful due to illness or probable absence. If they are not entered and they become available to participate, **Rule 5b (3)** may prevent their entry as a substitute.*

c. Team Reps shall examine the firm entry lists of the opposing teams prior to the meet. If the firm entry list has an obvious irregularity, that irregularity may be corrected by agreement of the competing Team Reps.

d. If an irregularity in a firm entry list is detected prior to swimming the event, the ineligible swimmer shall be scratched from that event, and no substitute shall be permitted. If a scratch due to an entry list irregularity occurs in a relay event, no substitution shall be permitted for the ineligible swimmer. If the Team Reps are unable to agree that there is an irregularity, the swimmer shall be allowed to compete under protest.

e. If a swimmer is entered in more than two individual events, the swimmer shall be scratched from the later entered individual event(s) and no substitute(s) shall be permitted. A swimmer who is entered in more than one age group relay shall be scratched from the later entered age group relay(s) and no substitute(s) shall be permitted.

f. The official result of an event conducted under protest shall not be announced and points shall not be awarded until the protest is resolved or withdrawn in writing. If an irregularity is detected after an event has been swum or if the event was swum under protest, the points earned by the swimmer determined to be ineligible shall be canceled. The order of finish shall be corrected and the meet score shall be adjusted.

g. Relay swimmers are not required to swim in the order in which their names are listed. (**Rule 12c3** has age group order of Mixed-Age Relays)

5. SUBSTITUTIONS AND SCRATCHES

a. All Meets

(1) A swimmer shall not be moved from one event to another under any circumstances.

(2) Coaches or Team Reps shall submit their written scratches and substitutions to the Officials listed on the Scratch-Substitution Form prior to the start of the meet or as far in advance of the applicable event as possible. Inadvertent failure to report a substitution shall not disqualify the substitute swimmer.

(3) An event shall not be delayed in order to permit substitutions after the meet has begun.

(4) An event shall not be reseeded because of substitutions.

(5) A substitution shall not be allowed for a swimmer who is disqualified under **Rule 1c**.

b. Team Meets

(1) No additions, deletions or other changes shall be made to the firm entry lists after they have been exchanged except as authorized by these rules.

(2) Substitutions may be made in individual events and relays only because of swimmers' sickness, injury, or absence under the conditions stated in **Rule 5b(3)** below. (See also **Rule 4b**.)

(3) In individual events, a swimmer with a faster time shall not be entered as a substitute for a swimmer with a slower time achieved in an individual event for the same stroke. For the purpose of this rule, times shall be achieved in NVSL dual or tri-meets during the current season excluding the meet in progress. This rule shall not prohibit a substitution when either swimmer does not have such a time. Times of disqualified swimmers shall not be considered under this rule.

(4) A swimmer who is scratched **AND** for whom a substitute swims shall be ineligible to compete in any subsequent event, including relays, during the meet.

c. Divisionals Meets see **Rule 6**. (For Division Relay Carnivals, see **Rule 21**.)

d. Individual All-Stars (For All-Star Relay Carnival, see **Rule 21f**.)

(1) A swimmer may scratch from an event without forfeiting the right to swim a subsequent event.

(2) Any unoccupied lanes due to scratches before or during the meet shall be open to alternate swimmers, designated by the League.

6. DIVISIONALS

Note: several Divisional related rules have been brought together under Rule 6. This has resulted in changing the previous order. We typically note the changes grayed and crossed out for one year but for space this year we only put in the new version.

a. Firm Entries: At a time designated by the Division Coordinator, Team Reps shall provide the Division Coordinator with a Firm Entry List with the names and seed times of no more than two swimmers (Firm Entries) for each event. Firm Entries shall not be moved from one event to another under any circumstances after submission.

b. Bid-Ins: At Divisional seeding, any remaining unoccupied lanes due to an insufficient number of Firm Entries, may be filled by swimmers **from other teams** in the division, referred to as Bid-Ins. Priority shall be given to swimmers who have the fastest seed times as proved in Rule 6c below. When this occurs, an event may have more than two swimmers from one team, but no swimmer shall be entered in more than two events. A list of Bid-Ins and their seed times may be given to the Division Coordinator at the seeding meeting. Bid-Ins may be moved among events.

c. Seeding Times: The seed times for Firm Entries and Bid-Ins shall be proven by any swim meet result attained by a swimmer for his/her NVSL team during the current season or, if the event has not been swum, by a current time certified by the Coach and Team Representative. Times of disqualified swimmers shall not be used as Divisional seed times. (See Rule 1p for yard/meter conversion.)

d. Substitutions and Scratches:

(1) After Divisional seeding, but prior to the start of the meet, each team may make up to ten substitutions to its own Firm Entries without regard to previously swum times. These changes shall be submitted to the Table using the usual Scratch/Substitution Form.

(2) Any unoccupied lanes resulting from scratches before or during the meet, shall be open to swimmers (Bid-Ins) **from other teams**. The procedure outlined in paragraph 6(b) shall be used to fill these lanes. Lanes designated “no swimmer lanes” at the seeding meeting shall not be open to any Bid-Ins thereafter.

(3) A swimmer may be substituted for or scratched from an event without forfeiting the right to swim a **previously entered subsequent event**.

e. Seeding Procedures: In each event, all swimmers shall be merged into heats and assigned to lanes using their seed times and **the pattern 3, 4, 2, 5, 1, 6, for a six-lane pool**. The last heat shall consist of the fastest swimmers; the next to last heat shall be the next fastest swimmers etc. If there are two or more heats, there shall be a minimum of three swimmers seeded in the first heat. The last heat should consist of six swimmers, but the requirement to seed three swimmers into the first heat may fail to fill the last heat (based upon USA Swimming rules).

f. Maximum Number of Lanes: to be used for each event shall be equal to the number of teams in the division multiplied by two, except in the event of a tie by the Bid-Ins for the last available lane, when all tied swimmers shall be permitted to swim.

7. POOL FACILITIES

a. This **Rule 7** shall be followed in lieu of the USA Swimming Rules on Facilities Standards.

b. The course shall be as near as possible to 25 meters or 25 yards.

c. Swimming lanes shall be at least five feet wide, separated by lane dividers and clear of obstructions such as diving boards, ladders, etc. Skimmer openings shall be covered in walls where swimmers turn and finish. Lanes should be marked with wall targets in accordance with USA Swimming Rules.

d. Lanes shall be numbered from right to left when facing the turning end of the pool.

e. Backstroke flags shall be located 15 feet from each end of the course. Markers shall be located on the pool **deck** and/or lane lines 15 meters from each end of the course.

f. Wires or cables that temporarily cross the swimming lanes shall be perpendicular to the swimming lanes and shall cross the lanes at the backstroke flags.

8. LANE ASSIGNMENTS

a. Team Meets - In dual meets the host team shall use lanes 1, 3, and 5; the visiting team lanes 2, 4, and 6. In triangular meets lanes shall be decided by lot in the combinations of lanes 1 and 4, 2 and 5, and 3 and 6.

b. Divisional and All-Stars Meets - Swimmers shall be assigned to lanes in descending order (fastest to slowest) of submitted times using the following pattern for a six-lane pool: 3, 4, 2, 5, 1, 6.

9. EVENTS

a. In team meets, the events shall be swum in the order listed in this Handbook in **Rule 23**.

b. For Divisionals and Individual All-Stars, the events shall be swum in the order listed in **Rule 24**, except that the order of events shall rotate each year so that, in successive years, these meets shall start with the freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke, butterfly, and individual medley events.

c. The order of events for Relay Carnivals is in **Rule 22**.

10. OFFICIALS

a. Team Reps shall not serve as Division Coordinators in their team's division unless approved by the NVSL Executive Board in extenuating circumstances.

b. Only one person from each team shall be designated as the Team Rep on the firm entry list. In team meets, the designated Team Rep from the host team shall be the Meet Manager. The designated Team Rep(s) from the visiting team(s) shall be the Assistant Meet Manager(s). These Team Rep(s) shall not serve in any other capacity during team meets. In divisional meets, the Division Coordinator shall be the Meet Manager and the Team Rep of the host pool shall be the Assistant Meet Manager.

c. The following officials represent the **MINIMUM** requirements for team meets:

Referee.....1	Announcer 1
Starter1	Clerk of Course 1
Stroke and Turn Judges4	Place Recorder 1
Relay Take-off Judges8	Data Entry 1
Chief Timer.....1	Verifier 1
Timers18	Awards Clerk 1
Marshals.....2	

d. Unless otherwise agreed to, teams shall provide the following:

(1) Host Team Referee, Starter, two Stroke and Turn Judges, four Relay Take-off Judges, Chief Timer, one-half of the Timers, at least one Marshal, Announcer, Clerk of Course, Asst. Place Recorder, Head Data Entry, Verifier, Awards Clerk, and Runner(s).

(2) Visiting Team Two Stroke and Turn Judges, four Relay Take-off Judges, Asst. Chief Timer, one-half of the Timers, at least one Marshal, Asst. Clerk of Course, Place Recorder, Asst. Data Entry, Verifier, Asst. Awards Clerk, and Runner(s).

e. The duties of the Officials shall be as outlined in the USA Swimming Rules. The Referee and Judges shall be especially familiar with these rules. The Referee, Starter, and Stroke and Turn Judges shall be qualified in accordance with the League Officials' Qualification Procedures.

f. In team meets, the host team shall arrange for furnishing the starting device, computer and printer. A back-up starting device, computer and printer shall also be available at the meets. Teams shall furnish watches for the number of Timers provided by their team.

g. Officials for the Division Relay Carnival and Divisionals shall be assigned by the Division Coordinators, in consultation with the Team Reps. All-Star Meet Officials shall be assigned by the League.

11. **TIMING**

a. In **all** meets at least three Timers shall be assigned to each lane. In dual meets unless otherwise agreed, the host team shall provide one Timer on lanes 1, 3, and 5 and two Timers on lanes 2, 4, and 6. The visiting team shall provide all other lane Timers. In tri-meets, unless otherwise agreed, there shall be one timer from each team in each lane.

b. All watches shall be hand-held, battery powered, digital watches, designed for timing purposes, with a readout resolution of one one-hundredth of a second (two decimal places).

c. Timers shall report their watch times to the Head Lane Timer and, if requested, shall present their watches for inspection. They shall not clear their watches until the command to "clear watches" is given, or the Referee signals that the next heat or event is ready to start.

d. The Head Lane Timer **shall verify the name of the swimmer** and shall determine the official time as follows: (1) If the times from two watches agree, that is the official time. (2) If all three watches disagree, the time of the intermediate watch is the official time. (3) If only two watch times are available, the official time is the average of those two watches. The digits representing thousandths of a second shall be dropped with no rounding.

e. The Head Lane Timer shall **LEGIBLY** record the official time for the lane on the card provided for that purpose and shall present the card to the Chief Timer.

f. The Chief Timer shall collect all time cards, check them for accuracy, and then send them to the Place Recorder.

g. Official times to two decimal places (hundredths of a second) shall be used to determine the order of finish, seeding, and records.

12. TECHNICAL RULES

a. Except as modified herein, rules concerning individual strokes and relays shall be defined by the current USA Swimming Rules.

b. The Start

(1) Starting blocks shall not be used.

(2) The no-recall and whistle start procedure of the USA Swimming Rules shall be followed. Optional verbal instructions, announcing the distance and the stroke may be used by the Starter.

(3) The forward start (for Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Individual Medley) may be from the pool deck without the aid of devices which elevate any part of the swimmer's feet. A single flat towel may be used. Swimmers may start in the water, provided one hand touches the edge of the pool or gutter.

(4) The Backstroke start, in lieu of USA Swimming Rules, shall be as follows:

(a) The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end and may secure a handhold only below the knees of another person to prepare for the start. The heels of the persons providing such assistance shall not extend over the vertical plane of the end of the pool. Only one other person may assist the person whose legs are grasped by the backstroker. Assistance shall not be rendered by HEAD Coaches, Timers, or anyone officiating at the meet.

(b) A towel may be draped over the pool edge to facilitate the swimmer's traction on the pool wall. Towels shall be removed from the pool edge before the swimmer returns to the starting end.

(c) Prior to the command "take your mark" and until the feet leave the wall at the starting signal, the swimmer's heels shall be in contact with the water. Standing in or on the gutter is not permitted before or during the start. Curling of the toes over the edge of the gutter is permitted. A standing start shall not be used.

c. Relays (also see Rule 4.g.)

(1) Relay swimmers shall not run when executing a relay take-off. Violations of this rule shall be called by the Referee and in Relay Carnivals, by officials designated by the Referee.

(2) In the Medley Relay, the Freestyle leg may be swum in any manner or style.

(3) It shall be the responsibility of the Mixed-Age Freestyle Relay swimmers to swim in the following order: 11-12 swimmer, 10 & Under swimmer, 13-14 swimmer, and 15-18 swimmer.

(4) A relay team shall not be disqualified for a delay in leaving the water unless an exiting swimmer is still in the water when another member of the relay touches at the exiting swimmer's end of the pool.

(5) In relay events, dual relay take-off judging shall be used. Lane and Side Take-off Judges shall independently record each exchange of swimmers and report infractions in writing without using infraction hand signals. A relay shall be disqualified only if the Lane Take-off Judge reports an infraction and the assigned Side Take-off Judge confirms the infraction. Two Side Take-off Judges shall be assigned to each end of the pool. No acting Officials, except Timers and the Starter, may serve as Relay Take-off Judges.

d. In an Individual Medley event, the Freestyle leg may be swum in any manner or style.

13. DISQUALIFICATIONS

Disqualifications shall be governed by USA Swimming Rules and shall be strictly enforced in all meets. When a disqualification occurs duplicate DQ Slips shall be prepared and furnished promptly to the Place Recorder and to the Team Representative of the disqualified swimmer. When the disqualification is due to a relay take-off infraction, the relay take-off slips confirming the infraction shall be attached to the disqualification slip and submitted to the Place Recorder. In the Individual All-Star Meet, the Referee or his/her designee should inform the swimmer(s) if they are disqualified, prior to the awards presentation.

14. PROTESTS

a. Protests involving turns, strokes, and other Technical Rules (USA Swimming Technical Rules and League **Rule 12**):

(1) This type of protest shall be lodged by the Team Representative with the Referee within 30 minutes after the last event of the meet has been swum. No protest lodged by any other person will be considered.

(2) Decisions rendered by the Referee on protests involving turns, strokes, and other Technical Rules (USA Swimming Technical Rules and League **Rule 12**) shall be final and binding upon all parties involved.

b. Protests involving non-technical League Rules:

(1) When protests involving League rules other than Technical Rules (USA Swimming Technical Rules and League **Rule 12**) arise during or after a meet, the Team Reps involved shall make all possible efforts to resolve their differences. Failing this, a protest must be submitted in writing to the League President within three (3) days of the date of the meet.

(2) Upon receipt of such protest, the League President shall appoint a protest committee of three members unaffiliated with the division where the protest originated. The President shall designate one member as chair. The President shall not serve on the protest committee.

(3) The protest committee shall have authority to examine all meet records or other evidence deemed pertinent to the matter under consideration, to conduct interviews, and to require that all parties to the protest submit written statements of the facts. The protest committee shall give the Team Reps involved in the protest reasonable opportunities to submit written statements and written responses to written statements. The Team Reps may supplement the statements and responses with written statements of meet officials and other witnesses.

(4) Decisions rendered by the protest committee shall be final and binding.

(5) If a violation of these rules is found by the protest committee to have been intentional, the protest committee may, subject to approval of the Executive Board, declare a forfeiture or set a penalty greater than that allowed by **Rule 4f**.

c. No protest of any nature shall be considered later than three days after the date of the last League meet of the season.

15. SCORING

a. The order of finish shall be determined by the times of all qualified swimmers in each event. The times of disqualified swimmers shall not be used for any purpose or entered in any League results.

b. Individual events in dual and tri meets shall be scored 5 - 3 - 1. Relay events in dual and tri meets shall be scored 5 - 0. In tri meets, points shall be awarded based on teams swimming against one another in a multiple dual meet format often referred to as a “double dual meet.”

c. When there is a tie, no points shall be given for the place or places immediately following the tied positions. (If a two-way tie for first place, no points for second place; if a three-way tie for first place, no points for second and third places etc.) Tied swimmers shall be awarded **an equal** share of the total points involved in the tie.

d. Points shall not be awarded for an event unless it is swum.

e. If all swimmers or official relay teams in an event are disqualified, no points shall be awarded and the event shall not be re-swum.

f. The Divisional Relay Carnival shall be scored 14 - 10 - 8 - 6 - 4 - 2 when six teams participate in the meet, and 12 - 8 - 6 - 4 - 2 when five teams participate in the meet.

g. The All-Star Relay Carnival shall be scored:

44 - 38 - 36 - 34 - 32 - 30 - 28 - 26 - 24 - 20 - 16 - 14 - 12 - 10 - 8 - 6 - 4 - 2.

h. Divisionals and Individual All Stars are not scored meets.

16. MEET RESULTS

a. At the end of the meet, a complete set of the electronically prepared meet results that have been previously verified against the time cards by Data Entry and a Table Worker (Verifier), shall be printed and marked as the “Official Meet Results. These results shall be signed by the Referee and sent to the Division Coordinator accompanied by the original Scratch-Substitution Forms (white copies) and a list of Officials who worked the meet.

b. Each host team shall, not later than the following Tuesday, provide each team in the division with an electronic copy of: (1) the Official Meet Results, (2) the original Scratch-Substitution Forms and (3) the list of Officials who worked the meet.

c. Host teams shall retain all meet documents (time cards, meet sheets, DQ slips and verification sheets) until June 1 of the following year. Teams will produce these documents without delay when requested by a Protest Committee Chair.

d. The Division Coordinator shall review the sheets listed in **Rule 16a** and forward them to the Chair of the Seeding Committee. Upon completion of seeding, the Seeding Committee Chair will forward them to the League Historian.

e. The Division Coordinator shall retain the time cards, meet sheets, DQ slips, verification sheets and scratch sheets, from the Relay Carnival and Divisional meets, not submitted at All Star seeding meetings, until June 1 of the following year.

17. AWARDS

- a. In team meets, League provided ribbons shall be awarded for all places in individual and relay events.
- b. In Divisional Relay Carnivals, ribbons shall be awarded for all places in each event. A trophy shall be awarded to the division winner.
- c. In Divisionals, medals shall be awarded for the first six places and ribbons shall be awarded for the seventh through twelfth places in each event.
- d. A trophy shall be awarded annually to the team that wins the most team meets within its division. A tie is counted as a one-half win. If triangular meets are swum in the division, the championship shall be determined by a method decided at a preseason meeting by the Team Reps in the division. If there is a tie for a division championship, duplicate trophies shall be awarded.
- e. In All-Star meets, medals or ribbons shall be awarded for all places. The six highest scoring teams shall be awarded trophies at the All-Star Relay Carnival. Additionally, a traveling trophy shall be awarded to the winner of the All-Star Relay Carnival. If an All-Star meet is canceled, awards shall be distributed in the manner described in **Rule 1n**.
- f. Duplicate awards shall be given in case of ties.
- g. A Sportsmanship Award shall be given annually to the one team in each division that best exemplifies the principles of good sportsmanship as embodied in the NVSL Standards of Conduct printed in this Handbook. The division's teams vote for the award as follows:
 - (1) Each team shall cast three ballots: one based on the vote(s) of the Team Reps, one based on the vote(s) of their Coaches and one based on the votes of the 13 & Over team members;
 - (2) The team's ballots do not need to be unanimous, but the ballots shall all be for one of the other teams in the division;
 - (3) The Division Coordinator shall break a tie vote when necessary;
 - (4) The ballots shall be given to the Division Coordinator at the Divisional Seeding and the award shall be presented at Divisionals.

18. CHAMPIONSHIP MEET LOCATIONS

- a. Relay Carnivals, Divisionals, and All-Star Meets shall be held in 25-meter pools.
- b. These meets shall be held only in pools which have at least six lanes, each a minimum of five feet in width. Lanes shall be free of obstructions such as ladders or steps and should have proper lane and bulkhead (wall) markings.

19. RECORDS

- a. The League shall maintain an up-to-date set of records of the fastest times achieved in League competition. League records shall be recorded to hundredths of a second. These records shall be maintained for each event swum in League competition over the following distances only: 25, 50, 100 and 200 yards/meters.

- b.** To be accepted as a League record, a performance shall be timed with at least three timing devices.
- c.** Times shall be considered for record purposes only if an official time card, signed by the Referee, the Chief Timer and the three lane Timers who timed the swimmer(s) is submitted to the League Records Chair, provided that the signed time card is submitted no later than three days after the last NVSL meet of the season in which the record was set.
- d.** No relay leg times or split times are acceptable for League records. Record times shall be acceptable only for the age group of the swimmer setting the record including "swim-ups." A swimmer who is "swimming up" in an older age group shall be eligible to set a record for his or her own age group, but not for the older age group.
- e.** If more than one swimmer or relay team breaks the same NVSL record on that same calendar day, all will be recognized as record breakers, but only the fastest time will be recorded as the new record.

20. HOW MEETS ARE SCHEDULED

Meets are scheduled by current seeding. The host team is determined by the Division Coordinator in conjunction with the Team Reps.

Week 1	1-4	2-5	3-6
Week 2	1-6	2-4	3-5
Week 3	1-3	2-6	4-5
Week 4	1-5	2-3	4-6
Week 5	1-2	3-4	5-6

21. RULES FOR RELAY CARNIVALS

a. Each division shall conduct a Division Relay Carnival in which each team has only one entry per event. The entry shall be either the official relay team or an unofficial relay team.

(1) Swimmers on official relay teams shall swim in their own age groups.

(2) Swimmers on unofficial relay teams shall meet the same sex requirements as the official relay teams and shall swim the stroke(s) of the event in which they are participating. They shall swim only in their own age group or in an older age group.

(3) The Division Coordinator shall be advised of the entry of an unofficial relay team as far as practical before the event. An unofficial relay team shall not receive points, awards or be eligible for the All-Star Relay Carnival. An infraction by any unofficial relay team shall not cause the disqualification of an official relay team. Unsportsmanlike conduct by an unofficial relay team shall be grounds for denying further unofficial entries by the offending team.

b. A swimmer may swim in the mixed age and two age group relays.

c. The distance for the 13-14 age group relays shall be 200 meters.

d. Rules Specific to Division Relay Carnivals:

(1) The Division Coordinator shall hold a planning meeting prior to the day of the meet.

(2) Lane assignments shall be made without regard to seeding times and shall rotate after each event.

(3) Teams shall report to Clerk of Course for their event with time cards listing the first and last names of their swimmers for that event.

e. The League shall conduct an All-Star Relay Carnival in which entries for each event are the eighteen fastest relay teams League-wide from the Division Relay Carnivals.

f. Rules Specific to All Star Relay Carnival:

(1) A relay that qualifies for the All-Star Relay Carnival shall be allowed one substitution provided three of the swimmers who qualified are swimming. Substitute swimmers may be faster or slower than the swimmers they replace.

(2) One alternate team shall be listed in the program for each event and shall be available to swim.

(3) All swimmers on official and alternate relay teams shall report to Clerk of Course.

22. EVENTS FOR RELAY CARNIVALS

<u>Girls Event #</u>		<u>Boys Event #</u>
1.....	200 M....Mixed-Age...Freestyle Relay.....	2
3.....	100 M.....8 & U.....Medley Relay.....	4
5.....	100 M.....9-10.....Medley Relay.....	6
7.....	100 M.....11-12.....Medley Relay.....	8
9.....	200 M.....13-14.....Medley Relay.....	10
11.....	200 M.....15-18.....Medley Relay.....	12
13.....	100 M.....8 & U.....Freestyle Relay.....	14
15.....	100 M.....9-10.....Freestyle Relay.....	16
17.....	100 M.....11-12.....Freestyle Relay.....	18
19.....	200 M.....13-14.....Freestyle Relay.....	20
21.....	200 M.....15-18.....Freestyle Relay.....	22

23. TEAM MEET EVENTS *(Dual and Triangular Meets)*Boys Event #Girls Event #8 & Under

1.....	1 length freestyle.....	2
11.....	1 length backstroke.....	12
21.....	1 length breaststroke.....	22
31.....	1 length butterfly.....	32
41.....	4 lengths freestyle relay.....	42

9 - 10

3.....	2 lengths freestyle.....	4
13.....	2 lengths backstroke.....	14
23.....	2 lengths breaststroke.....	24
33.....	1 length butterfly.....	34
43.....	4 lengths medley relay.....	44

11 - 12

5.....	2 lengths freestyle.....	6
15.....	2 lengths backstroke.....	16
25.....	2 lengths breaststroke.....	26
35.....	2 lengths butterfly.....	36
45.....	4 lengths medley relay.....	46

13 - 14

7.....	2 lengths freestyle.....	8
17.....	2 lengths backstroke.....	18
27.....	2 lengths breaststroke.....	28
37.....	2 lengths butterfly.....	38
47.....	4 lengths medley relay.....	48

15 - 18

9.....	2 lengths freestyle.....	10
19.....	2 lengths backstroke.....	20
29.....	2 lengths breaststroke.....	30
39.....	2 lengths butterfly.....	40
49.....	8 lengths medley relay.....	50

Mixed-Age

51.....	8 lengths freestyle relay.....	52
---------	--------------------------------	----

(swum in the following order: 11-12, 10 & Under, 13-14, 15-18)

24. INDIVIDUAL MEET EVENTS (*Divisionals & Individual All-Stars*)Boys Event #Girls Event #8 & Under

1.....	1 length freestyle.....	2
11.....	1 length backstroke.....	12
21.....	1 length breaststroke.....	22
31.....	1 length butterfly.....	32

9 - 10

3.....	2 lengths freestyle.....	4
13.....	2 lengths backstroke.....	14
23.....	2 lengths breaststroke.....	24
33.....	1 length butterfly.....	34
41.....	4 lengths individual medley	42

11 - 12

5.....	2 lengths freestyle.....	6
15.....	2 lengths backstroke.....	16
25.....	2 lengths breaststroke.....	26
35.....	2 lengths butterfly.....	36
43.....	4 lengths individual medley	44

13 - 14

7.....	2 lengths freestyle.....	8
17.....	2 lengths backstroke.....	18
27.....	2 lengths breaststroke.....	28
37.....	2 lengths butterfly.....	38
45.....	4 lengths individual medley	46

15 - 18

9.....	2 lengths freestyle.....	10
19.....	2 lengths backstroke.....	20
29.....	2 lengths breaststroke.....	30
39.....	2 lengths butterfly.....	40
47.....	4 lengths individual medley	48

**** Events 41 and 42 are 10 & Under events.**

NOTE: In 2021 these meets shall start with Event 11.

USA SWIMMING RULES PERTAINING TO SWIMSUITS & MEDICAL TAPE

Unless otherwise provided in the Rules the NVSL adheres to the USA Swimming Rules concerning swimsuits and medical tape as summarized below.

SWIMSUITS (Article 102.8)

- Swimwear shall include only swimsuit, goggles and not more than 2 caps.
- Suits must be one or two-piece. (exception - 205.10.1)
- It is permissible for the swimmer to wear a single set of garments underneath his/her competition swimsuit for modesty and/or privacy reasons. (205.10.1)
- Suits must be made from textile materials.
- Men: suit may not extend above the naval or below the knees.
- Women: suit may not cover the neck, go past the shoulder, or extend below the knee.
- Exemptions may be granted on a case by case basis by the NVSL Chair of the Rules Committee or by his/her designee.
- Only FINA-approved tech suits may be worn in competitions. **No Technical suit may be worn by any 12& under athlete. (102.8.1.F)**
 - **a tech suit is a jammer or kneeskin with bonded seams, suits that do not extend beyond the hip or have stitched seams are allowed.**
- Swimsuits must be non-transparent and appropriate.
- Swimmers may not wear or use anything that aids buoyancy, speed, pace, or endurance.
- No fastening devices, i.e. no zippers or closure devices. (102.8.1.C -FINA 4.1.6) Suits with tie-backs are not permitted. A tie-back or a lace-up on the suit is considered a fastening device.

MEDICAL TAPE (Article 102.8.E)

Any kind of tape on the body is not permitted unless approved by Referee.

- Wound closure and protection: Band Aids, smaller dressings, and “Butterfly” type are okay. No referee notification is required for these smaller items. If a dressing is exceptionally large and/or the tape to hold a dressing completely surrounds a major limb then the referee should be notified.
- Buddy taping of the fingers and toes: No more than two fingers or toes can be taped together at a time. It is recommended that you always notify the referee in this case.
- Any type of Elastic Therapeutic or Kinesio Tape is not permitted.
- Any other type of taping that may support the muscles, ligaments, or tendons and/or provide compression to a joint is not permitted.

Except as otherwise noted, all provisions under Part One, Technical Rules, are effective beginning May 1, 2021, and until changed. All provisions under Parts Two through Seven are effective beginning January 1, 2021, unless otherwise indicated. Rules in effect on the first day of a meet shall govern throughout that meet.

TECHNICAL RULES

All competitive swimming events held under USA Swimming sanction shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules that are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition.

It is not the purpose of the Rules and Regulations of USA Swimming (the National Governing Body) contained herein to set standards of care for the safety of the swimmer. The swimmer, the swim coach, the swim club and the local public entity or pool owner should address safety considerations where events are held.

ARTICLE 101 INDIVIDUAL STROKES AND RELAYS

101.1 STARTS

- .1 **Equipment** — A loudspeaker start system conforming to 103.18, with or without an underwater recall device, and an electronic strobe signal visible to all manual timers for forward and backstroke starts, shall be the preferred starting device.
- .2 **The Start**
 - A At the commencement of each heat, the Referee shall signal to the swimmers by a short series of whistles to remove all clothing except for swimwear, followed by a long whistle indicating that they should take and maintain their positions on the starting platform, the deck, or in the water. In backstroke and medley relay events, at the Referee's first long whistle, the swimmers shall immediately enter the water and at the second long whistle shall return without undue delay to the starting position.
 - B When the swimmers and officials are ready, the Referee shall signal with an out-stretched arm to the Starter that the swimmers are under the Starter's control.
 - C On the Starter's command "take your mark," the swimmers shall immediately assume their starting position, in the forward start, with at least one foot at the front of the starting platform or the deck. Swimmers starting in the water must have at least one hand in contact with the wall or starting platform. When all swimmers are stationary, the Starter shall give the starting signal.
 - D When a swimmer does not respond promptly to the command "take your mark," the Starter shall immediately release all swimmers with the command "stand up" upon which the swimmers may stand up or step off the blocks.
 - E A swimmer shall not be disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start if the race is permitted to proceed. Enforcement of the correct starting position is the responsibility of the Starter.
- .3 **False Starts**
 - A Any swimmer starting before the starting signal is given shall be disqualified if the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation that a violation occurred. Swimmers remaining on the starting blocks shall be relieved from their starting positions with the "stand up" command and may step off the blocks.
 - B If the starting signal has been given before the disqualification is declared, the race shall continue without recall. If the Referee independently observes and confirms the Starter's observation that a violation occurred, the swimmer or swimmers who have false started shall be disqualified upon completion of the race.
 - C If the recall signal is activated, no swimmer shall be charged with a false start and the Starter shall restart the race upon signal by the Referee.

101.1

- D A swimmer who would otherwise be charged with a false start may be relieved of the charge if the false start was caused by the swimmer's reaction to the "stand up" command.
- E Declared false start: swimmers reporting to the Referee prior to the start of their race and declaring their intent not to compete will be disqualified except as noted in 207.11.6D(1).
- 4 **Warning Signal** — With the exception of relays, in events 500 yards or longer, the Starter or a designee shall sound a warning signal over the water at the finish end of the lane of the leading swimmer when that swimmer has two lengths plus five yards or five meters to swim. As an alternative, a bell warning signal may be given over each lane by a lane judge or timer for that lane.
- 5 **Deliberate Delay or Misconduct**
 - A The Starter shall report a swimmer to the Referee for delaying the start, for willfully disobeying an order or for any other misconduct taking place at the start, but only the Referee may disqualify a swimmer for such delay, willful disobedience or misconduct.
 - B The Referee shall disqualify a swimmer who fails to appear at the starting platform ready to swim in time for the initial start of his/her heat.
 - C Such disqualification shall not be charged as a false start.

101.2 BREASTSTROKE

- 1 **Start** — The forward start shall be used.
- 2 **Stroke** — After the start and after each turn when the swimmer leaves the wall, the body shall be kept on the breast. It is not permitted to roll onto the back at any time except at the turn after the touch of the wall where it is permissible to turn in any manner as long as the body is on the breast when leaving the wall. Throughout the race the stroke cycle must be one arm stroke and one leg kick in that order.

All movements of the arms shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.

The hands shall be pushed forward together from the breast on, under, or over the water. The elbows shall be under water except for the final stroke before the turn, during the turn and for the final stroke at the finish. The hands shall be brought back on or under the surface of the water. The hands shall not be brought back beyond the hip line, except during the first stroke after the start and each turn.

During each complete cycle, some part of the swimmer's head shall break the surface of the water. After the start and after each turn, the swimmer may take one arm stroke completely back to the legs. The head must break the surface of the water before the hands turn inward at the widest part of the second stroke.
- 3 **Kick** — After the start and each turn, at any time prior to the first breaststroke kick, a single butterfly kick is permitted. Following which, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternating movement.

The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. Scissors, alternating movements or downward butterfly kicks are not permitted except as provided herein. Breaking the surface of the water with the feet is allowed unless followed by a downward butterfly kick.
- 4 **Turns and Finish** — At each turn and at the finish of the race, the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. At the last stroke before the turn and at the finish, an arm stroke not followed by a leg kick is permitted. The head may be submerged after the last arm pull prior to the touch, provided it breaks the surface of the water at some point during the last complete or incomplete cycle preceding the touch.

101.3 BUTTERFLY

- 1 **Start** — The forward start shall be used.
- 2 **Stroke** — After the start and after each turn, the swimmer's shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast. The swimmer is permitted one or more leg kicks, but only one arm pull under water, which must bring the swimmer to the surface. It shall be permissible for a swimmer to be completely submerged for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head

must have broken the surface. The swimmer must remain on the surface until the next turn or finish. From the beginning of the first arm pull, the body shall be kept on the breast except at the turn after the touch of the wall where it is permissible to turn in any manner as long as the body is on the breast when leaving the wall. Both arms must be brought forward simultaneously over the water and pulled back simultaneously under the water throughout the race.

- .3 **Kick** — All up and down movements of the legs and feet must be simultaneous. The position of the legs or the feet need not be on the same level, but they shall not alternate in relation to each other. A scissors or breaststroke kicking movement is not permitted.
- .4 **Turns** — At each turn the body shall be on the breast. The touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. Once a touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner desired. The shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall.
- .5 **Finish** — At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

101.4 BACKSTROKE

- .1 **Start** — The swimmers shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grips. Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes above the lip of the gutter, or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter, before or after the start, is prohibited. When using a backstroke ledge at the start, the toes of both feet must be in contact with the end wall or face of the touchpad. Bending the toes over the top of the touchpad is prohibited.
- .2 **Stroke** — The swimmer shall push off on his back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it is permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and after each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.
- .3 **Turns** — Upon completion of each length, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. During the turn the shoulders may be turned past the vertical toward the breast after which an immediate continuous single arm pull or immediate continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. The swimmer must have returned to a position on the back upon leaving the wall.
- .4 **Finish** — Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back.

101.5 FREESTYLE

- .1 **Start** — The forward start shall be used.
- .2 **Stroke** — In an event designated freestyle, the swimmer may swim any style, except that in a medley relay or an individual medley event, freestyle means any style other than butterfly, breaststroke or backstroke. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and each turn. By that point the head must have broken the surface.
- .3 **Turns** — Upon completion of each length the swimmer must touch the wall.
- .4 **Finish** — The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his person touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance.

101.6 INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY — The swimmer shall swim the prescribed distance in the following order: the first one-fourth, butterfly; the second one-fourth, backstroke; the third one-fourth, breaststroke; and the last one-fourth, freestyle.

- .1 **Start** — The forward start shall be used.
- .2 **Stroke** — The stroke for each one-fourth of the designated distance shall follow the prescribed rules for that stroke, except in the freestyle, the swimmer must be on the breast except when executing a turn.
- .3 **Turns**
 - A Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that stroke, except that in the freestyle turn, the swimmer must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.
 - B The turns when changing from one stroke to another shall conform to the finish rules for the stroke just completed, and shall be as follows:
 - (1) **Butterfly to Backstroke** — The swimmer must touch as described in 101.3.5. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner, but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the back when the swimmer leaves the wall.
 - (2) **Backstroke to Breaststroke** — The swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner but the shoulders must be at or past the vertical toward the breast when the swimmer leaves the wall and the prescribed breaststroke form must be attained prior to the first arm stroke.
 - (3) **Breaststroke to Freestyle** — The swimmer must touch as described in 101.2.4. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner and must return to the breast before any kick or stroke.
- .4 **Finish** — The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his/her person touches the wall after the prescribed distance.

101.7 RELAYS

- .1 **Freestyle Relay** — Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance using any desired stroke(s). Freestyle finish rules apply.
- .2 **Medley Relay** — Four swimmers on each team, each to swim one-fourth of the prescribed distance in the following order: first, backstroke; second, breaststroke; third, butterfly; and fourth, freestyle. Rules pertaining to each stroke used as described in 101.6 (Individual Medley) shall govern where applicable. At the end of each leg, the finish rule for each stroke applies in each case.
- .3 **Mixed Gender Relays** — must consist of two (2) males and two (2) females.
- .4 **Rules Pertaining to Relay Races**
 - A No swimmer shall swim more than one leg in any relay event.
 - B When automatic relay take-off judging is used, each swimmer must touch the touch-plate or pad in his/her lane at the end of the course to have finished his/her leg of the relay race.
 - C In relay races a swimmer other than the first swimmer shall not start until his/her teammate has concluded his/her leg.
 - D Any relay team member and his/her relay team shall be disqualified from a race if a team member other than the swimmer designated to swim that leg enters the pool in the area where the race is being conducted before all swimmers of all teams have finished the race. Exception: When an in-the-water start is required or such start is approved by the Referee.
 - E Each relay team member shall leave the water immediately upon finishing his/her leg, except the last member.
 - F In relay races, the team of a swimmer whose feet have lost touch with the starting platform (ground or deck) before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified.
 - G In relay races involving in-the-water starts, the team of a swimmer who has lost touch with the end of the course before his/her preceding teammate touches the wall shall be disqualified, unless the swimmer in default returns to the original starting point at the wall.

101.7

- H On relays, the second, third and fourth swimmers are prohibited from starting from the top of the adjustable back plate. A swimmer must have at least part of one foot in contact with the starting platform in front of the adjustable back plate during a relay exchange.

ARTICLE 105
GUIDELINES FOR OFFICIATING SWIMMERS WITH A DISABILITY
IN USA SWIMMING MEETS

105.1 GENERAL

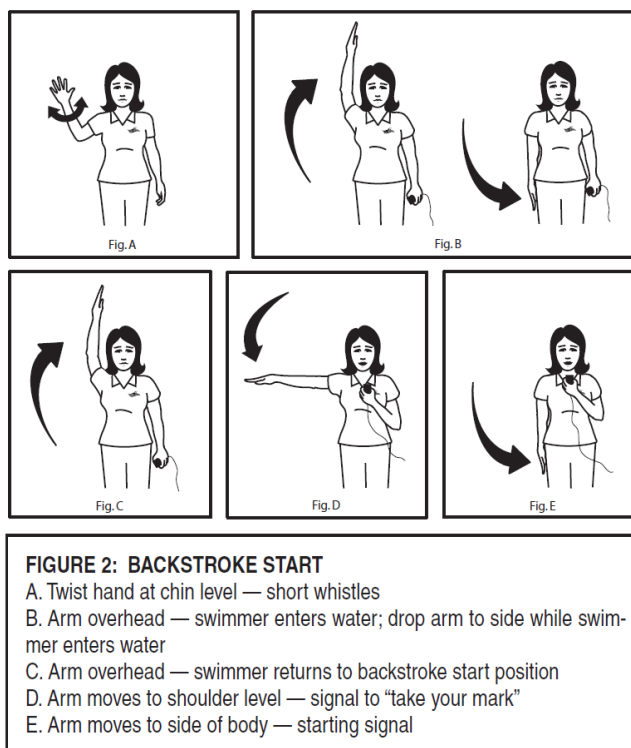
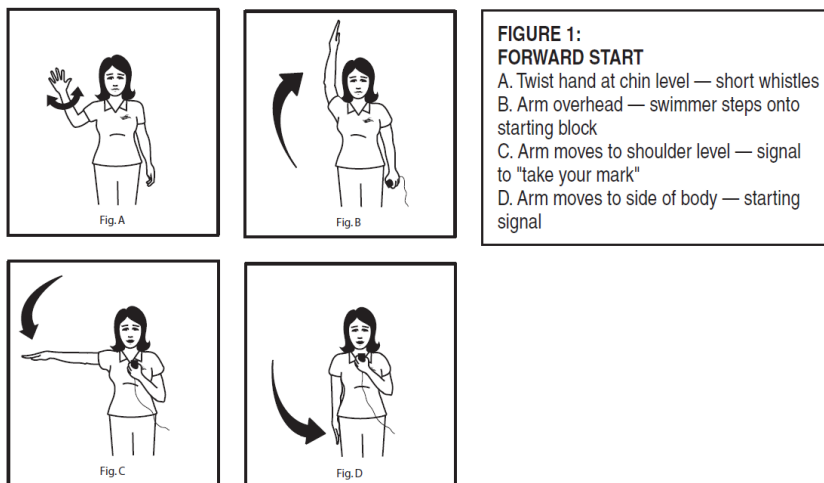
- .1 **Authority** — The USA Swimming Rules & Regulations grant the Referee the authority to modify the rules for the swimmer with a disability. Disability is defined as a permanent physical or cognitive disability that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This section contains guidelines and suggestions for making such modifications. Reference 701.24 for Open Water competitions.
- .2 **Responsibilities**
 - A **Swimmer** — The swimmer (or the swimmer's coach) is responsible for notifying the Referee, prior to the competition, of any disability of the swimmer and of the requested modification. The swimmer/coach shall provide any assistant(s) or equipment (tappers, deck mats, etc.) if required.
 - B **Referee** — The Referee's responsibilities include:
 - (1) Determining if the requested modifications are appropriate and can be met.
 - (2) Instructing the Starter and Stroke & Turn officials as to the accommodations to be made for that swimmer.
- .3 **Modifications** — Aids to buoyancy or speed are not allowed (See 102.8.1E). Some of the modifications which the Referee may make to accommodate the swimmer with a disability are:
 - A A change in starting position.
 - B Reassignment of lanes within a heat, e.g., exchanging Lanes 2 and 7.
 - C Allowing the swimmer to have a personal assistant(s). A personal assistant is not required to be a member of USA Swimming unless acting in a coaching capacity.Other allowable modifications are further described in this section under the type of disability.

105.2 BLIND AND VISION LOSS

- .1 **Start** — With an audible starting system, no modification is usually required for a swimmer who is blind or has vision loss. A swimmer may, however, require assistance getting to and on the block. Should the swimmer feel insecure starting from the block or deck, an in-the-water start is allowed.
- .2 **Turns and Finishes** — A swimmer who is blind or has vision loss is permitted to have personal assistants ("tappers" who use poles with soft-tipped ends to tap the swimmer as notification of turns and the finish). Sound devices shall not be used. It is the swimmer's responsibility to provide the tapper(s), who shall be positioned within the confines of the swimmer's lane at the ends of the pool.
- .3 **Relay Take-Offs** — A physical touch may be required to signal the relay swimmer when his/her teammate has touched the wall. The specific method may be tailored to the swimmer's preference so long as it does not aid the swimmer's take-off or interfere with the timing.

105.3 DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

- 1 Deaf and hard of hearing swimmers require a visual starting signal, i.e., a strobe light and/or Starter's arm signals. The Referee may reassign lanes within the swimmer's heat, i.e., exchanging one lane for another, so that the strobe light or Starter's arm signal can more readily be seen by the deaf or hard of hearing swimmer. Standard Starter's arm signals are shown in Figures 1 and 2. A false start rope is required in the event of a recall, provided the meet host is notified by the entry deadline that a deaf or hard of hearing swimmer will be participating.
- 2 **Strobe Light Location** — The Starter shall advise the swimmers about the location of the strobe light and the light shall be located where the swimmers can clearly see it for the start. For backstroke starts, the light should be positioned so that the swimmers don't have to turn their heads to look backwards.



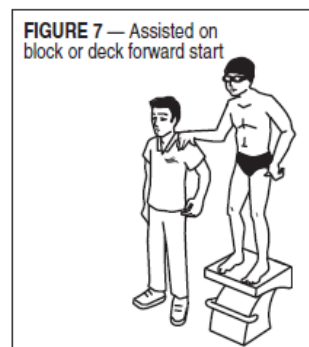
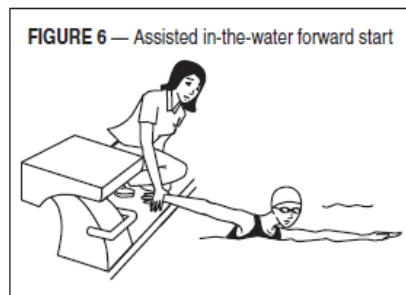
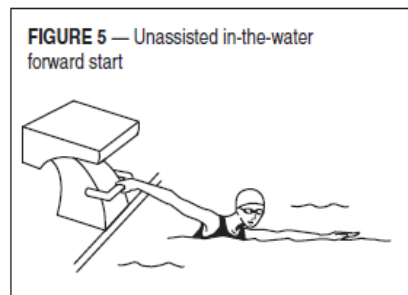
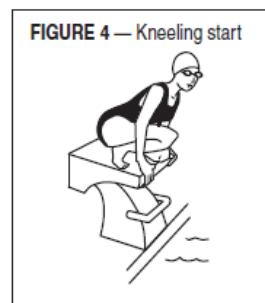
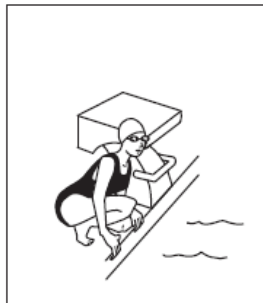
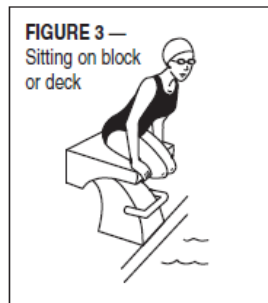
105.4 COGNITIVELY DISABLED — A swimmer may be permitted to have an assistant on the deck when necessary. No other specific rule modifications are required other than patience and clarity in communicating instructions.

105.5 PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

.1 **Start** — Swimmers with physical disabilities:

- A May take longer to assume their starting position;
- B May have difficulty holding the starting platform or pool end for a start;
- C May need assistance from someone on the deck to maintain a starting position;
- D May use a modified starting position on the blocks, deck or in the water.
- E Shall use a forward start for freestyle, breaststroke and butterfly. The Referee, however, may allow modifications such as the following:
 - (1) The swimmer may start from a sitting position on the block or on the deck;
 - (2) The swimmer may assume a starting position in the water, with or without assistance;
 - (3) If the swimmer cannot use a hand and/or foot to maintain contact with the wall, some other part of the body may be used.
 - (4) For breaststroke and butterfly, after the start and after each turn, a swimmer who is unable to push off with the leg(s) may perform one arm stroke that need not be simultaneous or on the horizontal plane to attain the breast position.

Examples of modified starting positions are shown in Figures 3 through 7.



105.5

- .2 **Stroke/Kick** — In judging the stroke or kick of a swimmer with a physical disability, the Referee and Stroke & Turn Judge should follow the general rule that: if a part of the body is absent or cannot be used, it is not judged; if it is used during the stroke or kick, it should be judged in accordance with the USA Swimming Rules & Regulations.

Judgments should be made based on the actual rule — not on the swimmer's technique. For example, the breaststroke swimmer with one arm or leg shorter than the other, may have a non-symmetrical stroke or kick, but as long as the arm or leg action is simultaneous, it would meet that portion of the rule. No flotation devices should be permitted.

.3 **Turn/Finishes**

- A Touches shall be judged in the same manner as strokes and kicks, i.e., on the basis of the arm(s) and/or hand(s) that the swimmer can use. In breaststroke and butterfly events, the competitor must reach forward as if attempting a simultaneous two-hand touch. When a swimmer has a different arm length, only the longer arm must touch the wall, but both arms must be stretched forward simultaneously. Swimmers with no arms or with upper limbs too short to stretch above the head may touch the wall with any part of the upper body.
- B At the turn and finish of the butterfly, an athlete with no leg function is permitted to perform a partial stroke with the arm(s) recovering forward under the surface of the water in order to touch the wall.

- .4 **Relays** — Relay swimmers who cannot exit the water immediately may be allowed to remain in the lane until all relays have finished so long as they do not interfere with the other swimmers or the timing equipment.