



# South Texas Swimming, Inc.

## Policies and Procedures Governing Officials



Effective date: May 1, 2013

Revised October 2, 2017

All past versions of this document are obsolete.

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### I. Preamble

- As in all sports, swimming requires Officials not only to promote and ensure fairness in the competition, but also to foster efficiency and timeliness in the management of competition. Unlike most other sports, swimming Officials are, by and large, unpaid volunteers, and perhaps as many as 75% of them are parents of swimmers.
- Officiating is a valuable and rewarding activity, eliminating the boredom of sitting in the stands during meets. Officiating allows you to be close to the action and stay involved with your children and their swim friends. However, the primary reason to become an Official is to promote and ensure the fairness and consistency that is necessary in the sport.
- South Texas has always been relatively fortunate in having a cadre of long-time Officials who have chosen to stay with the sport regardless of the fact that their children no longer participate. Several have had no member of their family involved for many years, but they continue to give of their time and experience. The continued presence of these dedicated Officials is one of the reasons why South Texas has a well-deserved reputation for excellence in meet officiating and meet management. However, there is an ongoing need for new Officials, especially as the popularity of the sport continues to spread, and there is an ever-increasing number of swimmers in South Texas.
- Becoming and remaining an Official is not difficult. However, as with most endeavors, becoming a confident and effective Official takes some dedication and perseverance. While we welcome “part-time” or “occasional” Officials, it is difficult to become confident or competent without devoting an adequate amount of time and effort. There are

systems in place to help you achieve both confidence and competence, and senior Officials are available to guide and mentor you as appropriate.

- While there are costs involved in becoming and remaining an Official, active Officials can have almost all of these costs reimbursed by South Texas Swimming.
- Swimmers as a group are among the most self-disciplined athletes one is likely to encounter. Swimming is a lifetime sport and it is essential that competitors learn the technical aspects of the strokes at an early age. It is for that reason that competent Officials are a virtual imperative. Even though it is somewhat unusual to be complimented as an Official, it is nonetheless true that your efforts are appreciated and meaningful in many ways.

## II. Introduction

- A. South Texas Swimming, Inc. (STSI) is one of 59 Local Swim Committees (LSCs) in the United States, operating under the general governance of USA Swimming (USA-S), which is the National Governing Body for United States Competitive Swimming. STSI has jurisdiction for that portion of the State of Texas bounded on the west by and including the counties of Val Verde, Sutton, and Schleicher; on the north by and including the counties of Menard, Mason, Llano, Burnet, Lampasas, and Bell; and on the east by and including the counties of Milam, Bureson, Washington, Austin, Fayette, Lavaca, Jackson, and Calhoun.
- B. Each LSC functions under its own set of bylaws that are documented in accordance with USA-S Policies, Rules, and Regulations; which in general state that no LSC policy, rule, etc. may be more stringent and/or constraining than those of the National Body.
- C. This document addresses the matters of recruiting, training, certifying, and retaining Officials in STSI. To that end, it codifies how individuals are initially certified, how progression is achieved, and how, once certified, Officials maintain their status.
- D. In STSI, swimming Officials are managed and governed by an Officials Committee, appointed by the Officials Committee Chair.
  - 1. The Officials Committee Chair is elected by the currently-registered Officials in STSI.
  - 2. The members of the Officials Committee shall be the Officials Chair, who shall serve as Chair, and at least four other members, each of whom shall be a certified Official of STSI.
    - a) Committee members shall represent different geographical areas of the LSC.
    - b) One of these members shall be a current STSI athlete. This member need not be a current Official.
    - c) The majority of the Officials Committee, including the Athlete Representative, may not come from a single geographical area.
- E. As of October 2, 2017, the Officials Committee is comprised of the following individuals:

<b>Name/Position</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>LSC Certification</b>	<b>E-mail Address</b>
Shaine Casas, Athlete Representative	McAllen	N/A	<a href="mailto:shainecasas@gmail.com">shainecasas@gmail.com</a>
Doug Donofrio, Member	San Antonio	Meet Referee	<a href="mailto:doug311@sbcglobal.net">doug311@sbcglobal.net</a>
Jessica Evans, Member	Austin	Meet Referee	<a href="mailto:jessicaevans@utexas.edu">jessicaevans@utexas.edu</a>
Hannah Lozano, Athlete Representative	San Antonio	N/A	<a href="mailto:hannahblozano@gmail.com">hannahblozano@gmail.com</a>
Trey Prinz, Member	Austin	Meet Referee	<a href="mailto:t.prinz.a@gmail.com">t.prinz.a@gmail.com</a>
Arthur Scott, Member	Corpus Christi	Starter	<a href="mailto:alscott57@gmail.com">alscott57@gmail.com</a>
Charles Yang, Chair	Round Rock	Meet Referee	<a href="mailto:hellaheat@yahoo.com">hellaheat@yahoo.com</a>

- F. All records and documents maintained by members of the Officials Committee remain the property of STSI and are to be surrendered within 48 hours of the end of service to South Texas Swimming.

### **III. Reciprocal Certifications**

- A. STSI grants full reciprocity to currently certified Officials coming from other LSCs, provided the former organization has policies in place that are at least similar to those of STSI.
- B. Officials requesting reciprocal certification must provide appropriate, current documentation attesting to their level of competence/certification in the previous LSC to the STSI Officials Chair.
  - 1. Their current USA-S Registration, Level II Background Check (BGC), and Athlete Protection Training (APT) status must also be verifiable.

### **IV. Categories of Officials in STSI**

- A. STSI Swimming Officials are categorized in the following manner:
  - 1. Meet Referee
  - 2. Deck Referee
  - 3. Starter
  - 4. Stroke and Turn Judge
  - 5. Administrative Official
  - 6. Open Water Judge
  - 7. Open Water Referee
  - 8. Stroke and Turn Judge Trainee
  - 9. Administrative Official Trainee
  - 10. Apprentice Starter
  - 11. Apprentice Deck Referee
  - 12. Assistant Meet Referee
  - 13. Apprentice Open Water Judge
  - 14. Apprentice Open Water Referee

- B. Unless otherwise certified, Meet Referees and Assistant Meet Referees are also certified as a Deck Referee, Starter, and Stroke and Turn Judge. A Meet Referee and/or Assistant Meet Referee may choose not to be certified as a Starter.
- C. Unless otherwise certified, Deck Referees and Apprentice Deck Referees are also certified as a Starter and Stroke and Turn Judge. A Deck Referee and/or Apprentice Deck Referee may choose not to be certified as a Starter.
- D. Starters and Apprentice Starters are also certified as a Stroke and Turn Judge.
- E. In addition to the previous categories, an Official who is certified as an Administrative Official and a Meet Referee is also certified as an Administrative Referee. Administrative Referees are authorized to act in the capacity of the Meet Referee should the Meet Referee be unavailable for any reason, only when a qualified Administrative Official or Administrative Referee is first appointed to act on their behalf.

## **V. The Online Officials Tracking System (OTS)**

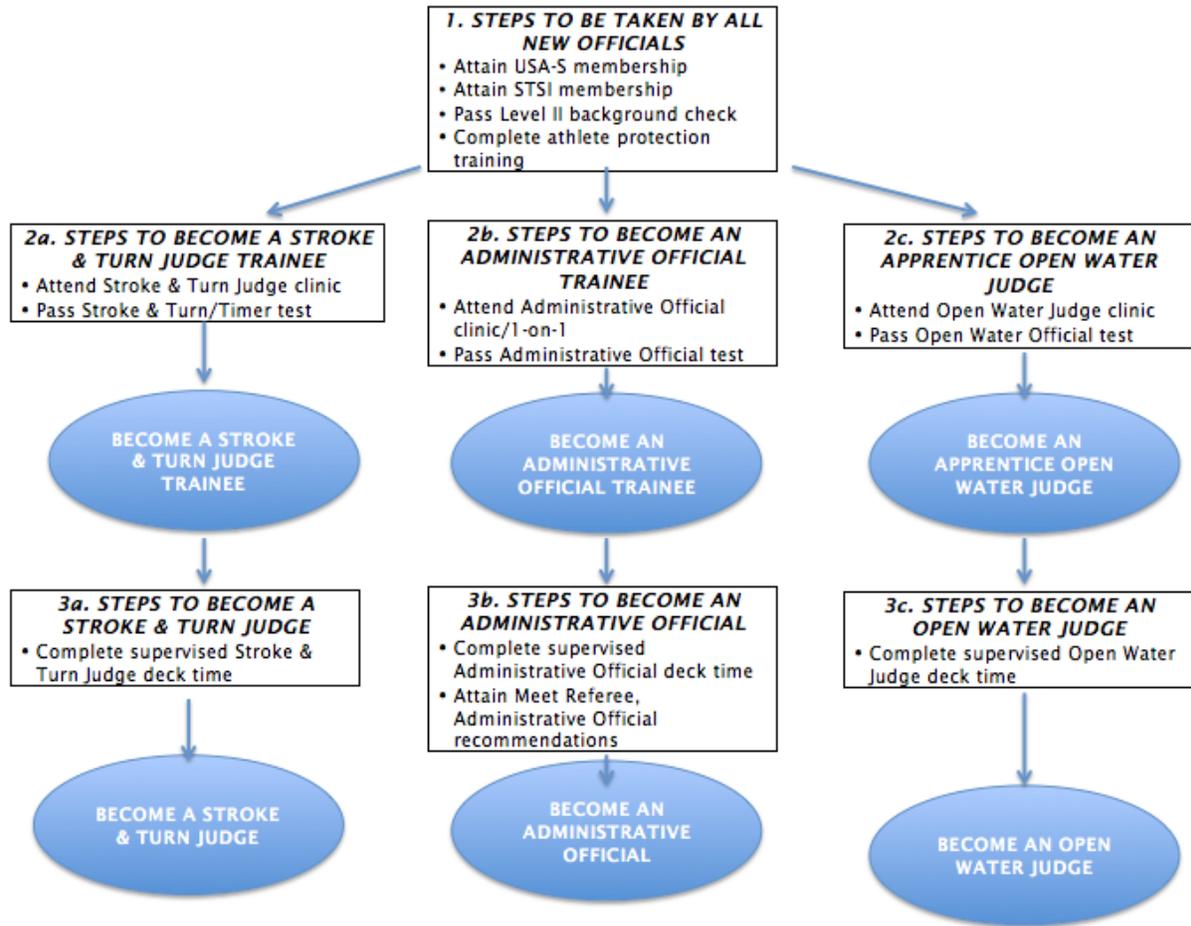
- A. The online Officials Tracking System (OTS) is used to maintain and track key information for STSI Officials.
  - 1. The OTS provides Officials easy access to viewing and tracking their status through a password-protected online account.
  - 2. The OTS is available through the USA-S Web site, at <http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1516&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>.
- B. The following items are included in OTS:
  - 1. Official's name and registration number
  - 2. Official's contact information
  - 3. USA-S and STSI membership status
  - 4. BGC and APT status
  - 5. LSC and National certifications; this includes Trainee or Apprentice status, if appropriate.
  - 6. Test results

7. Clinic attendance (starting in January 2012)
  8. Meets worked, including the number of sessions worked and the positions worked at each meet (starting with 2012 meets)
- C. Within one week of the conclusion of any USA-S Sanctioned or Approved meet in STSI, the Meet Referee will enter the Officials who worked the meet, along with the number of sessions they worked and the positions in which they worked, into OTS.
1. In addition, the Meet Referee must complete and submit the Meet Report within one week of the completion of the meet. This form is available on the STSI Officials page (<http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp?tabid=99565&team=szstxlsc#Documents>).
  2. When applicable, the Meet Evaluator will enter any evaluations completed at Officials Qualifying Meets (OQM) into OTS for Officials who requested an evaluation.
- D. Within 48 hours of the conclusion of any Observed meet in STSI, a STSI certified official must send an email to the SWIMS user(s) and the OTS manager with a list of all USA-S officials who worked the meet, the number of sessions they worked, and the position(s) in which they worked.
1. For Observed meets with a STSI certified Meet Referee present, the Meet Referee must send this information.
  2. For Observed meets without a STSI certified Meet Referee, a STSI certified official must be chosen to send this information.
- E. Access to information in OTS is restricted, as follows:
1. The Officials Chair has access to all information included in OTS.
    - a) The Officials Chair can designate others to have OTS access, as appropriate.
  2. The Meet Sanction Chair has access to set up meets in OTS, so Meet Referees can enter meet-specific information.
  3. Meet Referees have access to make additions, deletions, and changes impacting their specific meets.
  4. Training Clinic Leaders have access to make additions, deletions, and changes impacting their specific training clinics.

- a) Training Clinics must be set up in OTS by either the Officials Chair or the Meet Sanction Chair.
  - b) Officials have access to all information in their individual file.
5. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link.
- F. The OTS is designed for access by current Officials only.
1. If you have a problem accessing all the links available to you, it might be that you have not renewed your annual USA Swimming membership or have not completed the necessary biennial Level II Background Check (BGC) or annual Athlete Protection Test (APT).
  2. If you have a problem you cannot resolve, or have trouble logging in or navigating OTS, please contact Gina Mensay ([mailto:gmensay@usaswimming.org?subject=Question Regarding OTS](mailto:gmensay@usaswimming.org?subject=Question%20Regarding%20OTS)).
  3. Guidelines for using OTS are available on the USA Swimming Web site at <http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1516&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>.

## **VI. General Layout of Initial Certification in STSI**

- A. The following figure delineates the steps that must be taken to become an Official in STSI (the details follow):



- B. All new Officials must complete Step 1 items.
- C. New Stroke and Turn Judges then need to complete Step 2a and Step 3a items, new Administrative Officials then need to complete Step 2b and Step 3b items, and Open Water Judges then need to complete Step 2c and Step 3c items.
  - 1. Step 1 items must be completed either prior to Step 2a or 2b or 2c items, or in conjunction with Step 2a or 2b or 2c items.
  - 2. Both Step 1 and Step 2a or 2b or 2c items must be completed prior to Step 3a or 3b or 3c items.
- D. The Section titled [Steps to be Taken by All New Officials](#) includes a detailed description of each of these items.

## **VII. Steps to be Taken by All New Officials**

- A. Individuals must become active, non-athlete members of USA-S as a prerequisite to becoming certified in any capacity as an STSI Official.
  - 1. Once registered, that membership must remain current as long as the Official is active, and is a condition of all renewals.
    - a) USA-S membership status is available in OTS.
  - 2. There can be serious insurance and legal repercussions if the USA-S membership of an Official is allowed to lapse and the individual remains active on deck.
  - 3. The necessary USA-S form can be downloaded from the STSI Officials page (<http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp? tabid =99565&team=szstxlsc#Documents>).
  - 4. Membership in USA-S also ensures that the Official will automatically receive a copy of the annual USA-S rulebook upon availability.
- B. Individuals also must become active, non-athlete members of STSI as the prerequisite to becoming certified in any capacity as an STSI Official.

1. The potential Official must submit the STSI Officials Registration Form (found on the STSI Officials page at <http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp?tabid=99565&team=szstxlsc#Documents>) to the indicated individual along with the required fee.
  2. Once registered, that membership must remain current as long as the Official is active, and is a condition of all renewals.
    - a) STSI membership status is available in OTS.
- C. All Officials must successfully pass a Level II Criminal Background Check (Level II BGC) directed and managed by USA-S. Completing a USA Swimming background check is an online process that can be found on the USA-S site (<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1678&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>).
1. Level II BGC status is available in OTS.
- D. All Officials must successfully complete the hour-long Athlete Protection Training Course (APT) directed and managed by USA-S. Completing this course is an online process that is available on the USA-S site (<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=2193&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>).
1. APT status is available in OTS.

### **VIII. Steps to Become a Stroke and Turn Judge**

- A. Prospective Stroke and Turn Judges must meet the initial requirements stated for all Officials (see the Section titled [Steps to be Taken by All New Officials](#)).
- B. Prospective Stroke and Turn Judges must attend a Stroke and Turn Judge's Clinic led by, or approved by, an Officials Committee Member.
  1. Several Clinics are conducted throughout the LSC each year, and are publicized via various Web sites well in advance, including the STSI Officials site (<http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp?tabid=99565&team=szstxlsc>).
  2. These Clinics are free of charge and are open to anyone in South Texas who is interested in becoming a Stroke and Turn Judge.

3. The Stroke and Turn Judge presentation, which can be found on the STSI Officials site (<http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp?tabid=99565&team=szstxisc#Documents>), must be used as the basis for this Clinic.
    - a) The presentation should be customized for the presenter's style and the Clinic audience.
    - b) It is recommended that the Stroke and Turn Judge video be viewed as well.
  4. Within one week of the conclusion of the Clinic, a list of attendees must be entered into OTS by the Clinician.
    - a) Officials can check their clinic attendance history in OTS (starting with Clinics held in 2012).
    - b) If a Prospective Stroke and Turn Judge has not yet attained USA-S and STSI memberships, has not passed a Level II BGC, or has not completed the APT at the time of the Clinic, the Clinician can enter their attendance in the Clinic up to one month after the completion of the Clinic.
- C. Prospective Stroke and Turn Judges must pass the USA-S Stroke and Turn/Timer examination.
1. All Officials examinations must be taken online, and are available through the Officials section of the USA-S Web site (<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1510&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>).
    - a) The Officials Chair will be notified of the examination results.
    - b) A history of examination results is available to each Official in OTS.
    - c) Examinations must be completed within 90 days of clinic attendance.
      - (i) If this time constraint is not met, the Prospective Official might need to begin the entire process again.

- D. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as a Stroke and Turn Judge Trainee in STSI, Prospective Stroke and Turn Judges must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Desired change – Acquiring position as a Stroke and Turn Judge Trainee
- E. As soon as the data has been verified, applicants will be provided with Stroke and Turn Judge Trainee credentials, with an expiration date of eight months.
1. Stroke and Turn Judge Trainees cannot start their on-deck training until they successfully pass a Level II BGC, complete the APT, pass the Stroke and Turn/Timer test, and are properly credentialed by both USA-S and STSI.
  2. Stroke and Turn Judge Trainees are not permitted to impose disqualifications.
  3. Stroke and Turn Judge Trainees may not be listed as certified Officials required as a condition of either a Sanction or Approval.
- F. Stroke and Turn Judge Trainees must work at least 10 sessions, across at least 3 meets, under the direct supervision of more experienced and fully certified Officials.
1. All of the following competitions are acceptable meets only when the Meet Referee is properly and currently certified by USA-S as a Meet Referee. At least half of the session requirements must be fulfilled by working USA-S Sanctioned, Approved, or Observed meets.
    - a) USA-S Sanctioned or Approved meets
    - b) High School dual meets
    - c) High School Championship Invitational meets
    - d) High School District, Regional, and State Championship meets

- e) Collegiate dual meets
  - f) Collegiate Invitational meets
  - g) Collegiate Championship meets
  - h) U.S. Masters meets
  - i) U.S. Para-Olympic Competition
2. These sessions will be entered into OTS by the Meet Referees, so that a history of session attendance will be available in OTS.
- a) Stroke and Turn Judge Trainees may want to keep a log of the meets, and specific sessions they worked on deck, as a backup. The Meet Referee should sign the Trainee's log for each session worked.
- G. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as a Stroke and Turn Judge in STSI, Prospective Stroke and Turn Judges must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
- 1. Full name
  - 2. USA-S membership number
  - 3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  - 4. Desired change – Acquiring position as a Stroke and Turn Judge
- H. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be certified as a Stroke and Turn Judge.
- 1. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link within OTS.
- I. Stroke and Turn Judge Trainees must acquire the necessary deck experience within eight months of being certified as a Stroke and Turn Judge Trainee.
- 1. Generally, if this time constraint is not met, the Prospective Stroke and Turn Judge Official might need to begin the entire Trainee process again.
    - a) Under extraordinary circumstances, this time period can be extended.

- (i) The extension must be based on a specific reason.
- (ii) The extension must be recommended by the local Officials Committee Member and approved by the Officials Chair.
- (iii) The length of the extension is at the discretion of the Officials Chair, but cannot exceed an additional six months.

## **IX. Steps to Become an Administrative Official**

- A. Prospective Administrative Officials must meet the initial requirements stated for all Officials (see the Section titled [Steps to be Taken by All New Officials](#)).
- B. In addition, Prospective Administrative Officials must attend an Administrative Officials Clinic, which may be a one-on-one session, with an experienced and certified Administrative Official approved by the South Texas Officials Chair.
  - a) These Clinics are free of charge and are open to anyone in South Texas who is interested in becoming an Administrative Official.
  - b) Within one week of the conclusion of the Clinic (or one-on-one session), the Trainee must be entered into OTS by the Clinician.
  - c) Officials can check their clinic attendance history in OTS.
  - d) If a Prospective Administrative Official has not attained USA-S and STSI memberships, has not passed their Level II BGC, or has not completed the APT at the time of the Clinic, the Clinician can enter their attendance in the Clinic up to one month after the completion of the Clinic.
- C. Prospective Administrative Officials must pass the Administrative Official examination, which can be found on the USA Swimming Web site (<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1510&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>).

- D. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as an Administrative Official Trainee in STSI, Prospective Administrative Officials must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Desired change – Acquiring position as an Administrative Official Trainee
- E. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be provided with Administrative Official Trainee credentials, with an expiration date of eight months.
1. Administrative Official Trainees cannot start their on-deck training until they successfully pass a Level II BGC; complete the APT; pass the Administrative Official test; and are properly credentialed by both USA-S and STSI.
  2. Administrative Official Trainees may not be listed as certified Officials required as a condition of either a Sanctioned or Approved meet, unless they are currently certified in another Official category.
- F. Administrative Official Trainees must function as an Administrative Official Trainee for a minimum of six sessions encompassing at least two separate meets.
1. All of the following competitions are acceptable meets only when the Meet Referee is properly and currently certified by USA-S as a Meet Referee. At least half of the session requirements must be fulfilled by working USA-S Sanctioned, Approved, or Observed meets. Furthermore, the Official must work under the direct supervision of an Administrative Official certified by both USA-S and STSI.
    - a) USA-S Sanctioned or Approved meets
    - b) High School Championship Invitational meets
    - c) High School District, Regional, and State Championship meets

- d) Collegiate dual meets
  - e) Collegiate Invitational meets
  - f) Collegiate Championship meets
  - g) U.S. Masters meets
  - h) U.S. Para-Olympic Competition
2. These sessions will be entered into OTS by the Meet Referees, so that a history of session attendance will be available in OTS.
- a) Administrative Official Trainees may want to keep a log of the meets, and specific sessions they worked on deck, as a backup. The Meet Referee should sign the Trainee's log for each session worked.
- G. For one of the required meets, the Administrative Official Trainee must act in the capacity of the Administrative Official while being observed by a certified Administrative Official/Administrative Referee. As a result, this means that the Trainee must be involved during the meet itself as well all pre-meet and post-meet activities. The observing official should refrain from directing the Trainee during the course of the meet as the intent is to ensure that the Trainee is prepared to act as the sole Administrative Official in future meets.
- H. Administrative Official Trainees must be recommended by at least one currently certified Administrative Official and a separate individual who is either a Meet Referee or an Administrative Referee, prior to becoming an Administrative Official.
- I. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as an Administrative Official in STSI, Prospective Administrative Officials must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
- 1. Full name
  - 2. USA-S membership number
  - 3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  - 4. Names of the currently certified Administrative Official and currently certified Meet Referee/Administrative Referee who are recommending you as an Administrative Official

5. Desired change – Acquiring position as an Administrative Official
- J. As soon as the data has been verified, applicants will be certified as an Administrative Official.
1. Administrative Official Trainee Certifications expire at the end of eight months.
    - a) Under extraordinary circumstances, this period can be extended based on the recommendation of the Officials Committee Member within the candidate’s geographic area and the approval of the Officials Chair.
  2. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link within OTS.
- K. All meets must have an Administrative Official working for the duration of the meet.
1. If there is no Administrative Official at the meet, the meet’s results cannot be entered into the national SWIMS database.

## **X. Certification as a Starter**

- A. To become a Starter, the Official must be an STSI certified Stroke and Turn Judge and must have served as a Stroke and Turn Judge for a minimum of 12 sessions over 6 meets.
- B. Prospective Starters must attend a Starter’s Clinic or enter into a one-on-one session with an experienced Deck or Meet Referee approved by the LSC Officials Chair.
1. These Clinics are free of charge and are open to any current Official in South Texas who is interested in becoming a Starter.
  2. The Starter’s Presentation, which can be found on the STSI Officials page ([www.stswim.org/st-officials.htm](http://www.stswim.org/st-officials.htm)), must be used as the basis for this Clinic or one-on-one session.
  3. The presentation should be customized for the presenter’s style and the Clinic (or one-on-one) audience.
  4. Within one week of the conclusion of the Clinic (or one-on-one session), a list of attendees must be entered into OTS by the Clinician.

- a) Officials can check their clinic attendance history in OTS (starting with Clinics held in 2012).
- C. Prospective Starters must pass the USA-S Starter's examination.
1. All Officials examinations must be taken online, and are available through the Officials section of the USA-S Web site (<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1510&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>).
  - a) The Officials Chair will be notified of the examination results.
  - b) A history of examination results is available to each Official in OTS.
  - c) Examinations must be completed within 90 days of clinic attendance.
    - (i) If this time constraint is not met, the Prospective Starter might need to begin the entire process again.
  2. An Official must be certified as a Stroke and Turn Judge and have worked at least 10 sessions before taking the Starter's examination.
- D. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as an Apprentice Starter in STSI, Prospective Starters must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Desired change – Acquiring position as an Apprentice Starter
- E. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be designated as an Apprentice Starter on the Officials Roster.
1. The Official must then function in an Apprentice Starter's role for a minimum of ten sessions, encompassing at least six separate meets. All of the following competitions are acceptable meets only when the Meet Referee is properly and currently certified by USA-S as a Meet Referee.

- a) USA-S Sanctioned or Approved meets
  - b) High School dual meets
  - c) High School Championship Invitational meets
  - d) High School District, Regional, and State Championship meets
  - e) Collegiate dual meets
  - f) Collegiate Invitational meets
  - g) Collegiate Championship meets
  - h) U.S. Masters meets
  - i) U.S. Para-Olympic Competition
2. These sessions will be entered into OTS by the Meet Referees, so that a history of session attendance will be available in OTS.
    - a) Apprentice Starters may want to keep a log of the meets, and specific sessions they worked on deck, as a backup. The Meet Referee should sign the Apprentice Starter's log for each session worked.
  3. This apprenticeship must be completed within twelve months of taking, and passing, the USA-S Starter's examination.
- F. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as a Starter in STSI, Prospective Starters must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Names of at least three currently certified, active STSI Referees, who recommend your promotion to Starter based on observing your performance as an Apprentice Starter. One of these Referees must be the local Officials Committee Member, the STSI Officials Chair, or another senior Official approved by the STSI Officials Chair.

5. Desired change – Acquiring position as a Starter
- G. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be certified as an STSI Starter by the LSC Officials Chair.
  1. This certification will be listed on the Officials Roster.
  2. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link within OTS.

## **XI. Certification as a Deck Referee**

- A. To become a Deck Referee, the Official must be an STSI certified Stroke and Turn Judge and/or Starter and must have served as a Stroke and Turn Judge and/or Starter for a minimum of 16 sessions over 8 meets.
- B. Prospective Deck Referees must attend a Deck Referee's Clinic, which may be a one-on-one session, with an experienced Meet Referee approved by the LSC Officials Chair.
  1. Within one week of the conclusion of the Clinic (or one-on-one session), a list of attendees must be entered into OTS by the Clinician.
    - a) Officials can check their clinic attendance history in OTS (starting with Clinics held in 2012).
- C. Prospective Deck Referees must pass the following USA-S examinations:
  1. Referee Test
  2. Timing Judge Test
  3. Clerk of Course Test
  4. Administrative Test

For further reference:

1. The Officials Chair will be notified of the examination results.
2. A history of examination results is available to each Official in OTS.
3. Examinations must be completed within 90 days of clinic attendance.

- a) If this time constraint is not met, the Prospective Deck Referee might need to begin the entire process again.
  4. An Official must be certified as a Stroke and Turn Judge and/or a Starter and have worked at least 12 sessions before taking the Referee examination.
- D. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as an Apprentice Deck Referee in STSI, Prospective Deck Referees must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Desired change – Acquiring position as an Apprentice Deck Referee
- E. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be designated as an Apprentice Deck Referee on the Officials Roster.
1. The Official must then function in an Apprentice Deck Referee role for a minimum of twelve sessions, encompassing at least eight separate meets. All of the following competitions are acceptable meets only when the Meet Referee is properly and currently certified by USA-S as a Meet Referee. At least half of the session requirements must be fulfilled by working USA-S Sanctioned, Approved, or Observed meets.
    - a) USA-S Sanctioned or Approved meets
    - b) High School dual meets
    - c) High School Championship Invitational meets
    - d) High School District, Regional, and State Championship meets
    - e) Collegiate dual meets
    - f) Collegiate Invitational meets
    - g) Collegiate Championship meets

- h) U.S. Masters meets
    - i) U.S. Para-Olympic Competition
  - 2. These sessions will be entered into OTS by the Meet Referees, so that a history of session attendance will be available in OTS.
    - a) Apprentice Deck Referees may want to keep a log of the meets, and specific sessions they worked on deck, as a backup. The Meet Referee should sign the Apprentice Deck Referee's log for each session worked.
  - 3. This apprenticeship must be completed within twelve months of taking, and passing, the USA-S Referee's examination.
- F. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as a Deck Referee in STSI, Prospective Deck Referees must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
  - 1. Full name
  - 2. USA-S membership number
  - 3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  - 4. Names of at least three currently certified, active STSI Meet Referees, who recommend your promotion to Deck Referee based on observing your performance as an Apprentice Deck Referee. One of these Meet Referees must be the local Officials Committee Member, the STSI Officials Chair, or another senior Official approved by the STSI Officials Chair.
  - 5. Desired change – Acquiring position as a Deck Referee
- G. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be certified as an STSI Deck Referee by the LSC Officials Chair.
  - 1. This certification will be listed on the Officials Roster.
  - 2. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link within OTS.
- H. In STSI, there are certified Deck Referees who do not act as Starters. The LSC Officials Chair will certify such individuals as such.
  - 1. They are not permitted to start.

2. However, they must pass the Referee's examination in the normal fashion.

## **XII. Certification as a Meet Referee**

- A. Training as a Meet Referee cannot start until the Official has been certified as a STSI Deck Referee.
- B. To become a Meet Referee, the Official must be an STSI certified Deck Referee and must have served as a Deck Referee for a minimum of 4 sessions over 3 meets. In addition:
  1. The Official must be an assistant to the Meet Referee for at least three STSI Sanctioned or Approved meets.
    - a) This Official must be the assistant to the Meet Referee for the duration of these meets.
    - b) The Meet Referee for at least one of these meets must be a current Officials Committee Member or a senior Meet Referee who has been approved by the Officials Chair.
    - c) These three meets must include at least two different Meet Referees.
- C. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as a Meet Referee in STSI, Prospective Meet Referees must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
  1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Names of at least two currently certified, active STSI Meet Referees for which you served as an assistant, who recommend your promotion to Meet Referee. One of these Meet Referees must be a current Officials Committee Member, or a senior Meet Referee that has been approved by the Officials Chair.
  5. Desired change – Acquiring position as a Meet Referee
- D. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be certified as an STSI Meet Referee by the LSC Officials Chair.
  1. This certification will be listed on the Officials Roster.

2. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link within OTS.
- E. In STSI, there are certified Meet Referees who do not act as Starters. The LSC Officials Chair will certify such individuals as such.
1. They are not permitted to start.
  2. However, they must pass the Referee's examination in the normal fashion.

### **XIII. Certification as an Open Water Judge**

- A. Prospective Open Water Judges must meet the initial requirements stated for all Officials (see the Section titled [Steps to be Taken by All New Officials](#)).
- B. Prospective Open Water Judges must attend an Open Water Judge's Clinic led by, or approved by, an Officials Committee Member.
1. Several Clinics are conducted throughout the LSC each year, and are publicized via various Web sites well in advance, including the STSI Officials site (<http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp? tabid =99565&team=szstxlsc>).
  2. These Clinics are free of charge and are open to anyone in South Texas who is interested in becoming an Open Water Judge.
  3. Within one week of the conclusion of the Clinic, a list of attendees must be entered into OTS by the Clinician.
    - a) Officials can check their clinic attendance history in OTS (starting with Clinics held in 2012).
    - b) If a Prospective Open Water Judge has not yet attained USA-S and STSI memberships, has not passed a Level II BGC, or has not completed the APT at the time of the Clinic, the Clinician can enter their attendance in the Clinic up to one month after the completion of the Clinic.
- C. Prospective Open Water Judges must pass the USA-S Open Water Official examination.

1. All Officials examinations must be taken online, and are available through the Officials section of the USA-S Web site (<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1510&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>).
  - a) The Officials Chair will be notified of the examination results.
  - b) A history of examination results is available to each Official in OTS.
  - c) Examinations must be completed within 90 days of clinic attendance.
    - (i) If this time constraint is not met, the Prospective Official might need to begin the entire process again.
- D. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as an Apprentice Open Water Judge in STSI, Prospective Open Water Judges must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Desired change – Acquiring position as an Apprentice Open Water Judge
- E. As soon as the data has been verified, applicants will be provided with Apprentice Open Water Judge credentials, with an expiration date of twelve months.
1. Apprentice Open Water Judges cannot start their on-deck training until they successfully pass a Level II BGC, complete the APT, pass the Open Water Official test, and are properly credentialed by both USA-S and STSI.
  2. Apprentice Open Water Judges are not permitted to impose disqualifications.
  3. Apprentice Open Water Judges may not be listed as certified Officials required as a condition of either a Sanction or Approval.

- F. Apprentice Open Water Judges must work at least 1 meet under the direct supervision of more experienced and fully certified Officials. They must attend the pre-race briefing and then work as a Timing Judge, Finish Judge, Turn Judge, or Feed Station Judge.
1. These sessions will be entered into OTS by the Meet Referees, so that a history of session attendance will be available in OTS.
    - a) Apprentice Open Water Judges may want to keep a log of the meets they worked, as a backup. The Meet Referee should sign the Trainee's log for each session worked.
- G. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as an Apprentice Open Water Judge in STSI, Prospective Apprentice Open Water Judges must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Desired change – Acquiring position as an Open Water Judge
- H. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be certified as an Open Water Judge.
1. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link within OTS.
- I. Apprentice Open Water Judges must acquire the necessary deck experience within twelve months of being certified as an Apprentice Open Water Judge.
1. Generally, if this time constraint is not met, the Prospective Apprentice Open Water Judge might need to begin the entire Trainee process again.
    - a) Under extraordinary circumstances, this time period can be extended.
      - (i) The extension must be based on a specific reason.
      - (ii) The extension must be recommended by the local Officials Committee Member and approved by the Officials Chair.

- (iii) The length of the extension is at the discretion of the Officials Chair, but cannot exceed an additional six months.

#### **XIV. Certification as an Open Water Referee**

- A. Candidates for certification as an Open Water Referee must have been previously certified as an Open Water Judge for a minimum of three months.
- B. Prospective Open Water Referees must attend an Open Water Referee's Clinic led by, or approved by, an Officials Committee Member.
  - 1. Several Clinics are conducted throughout the LSC each year, and are publicized via various Web sites well in advance, including the STSI Officials site (<http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp?tabid=99565&team=szstxlsc>).
  - 2. These Clinics are free of charge and are open to anyone in South Texas who is interested in becoming an Open Water Referee.
  - 3. Within one week of the conclusion of the Clinic, a list of attendees must be entered into OTS by the Clinician.
    - a) Officials can check their clinic attendance history in OTS (starting with Clinics held in 2012).
    - b) If a Prospective Open Water Referee has not yet attained USA-S and STSI memberships, has not passed a Level II BGC, or has not completed the APT at the time of the Clinic, the Clinician can enter their attendance in the Clinic up to one month after the completion of the Clinic.
- C. Prospective Open Water Referee must pass the USA-S Open Water Referee examination.
  - 1. All Officials examinations must be taken online, and are available through the Officials section of the USA-S Web site (<http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1510&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>).
    - a) The Officials Chair will be notified of the examination results.

- b) A history of examination results is available to each Official in OTS.
  - c) Examinations must be completed within 90 days of clinic attendance.
    - (i) If this time constraint is not met, the Prospective Official might need to begin the entire process again.
- D. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as an Apprentice Open Water Referee in STSI, Prospective Open Water Referee must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
- 1. Full name
  - 2. USA-S membership number
  - 3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  - 4. Desired change – Acquiring position as an Apprentice Open Water Referee
- E. As soon as the data has been verified, applicants will be provided with Apprentice Open Water Referee credentials, with an expiration date of twelve months.
- 1. Apprentice Open Water Referees cannot start their on-deck training until they successfully pass a Level II BGC, complete the APT, pass the Open Water Referee test, and are properly credentialed by both USA-S and STSI.
  - 2. Apprentice Open Water Referees are not permitted to impose disqualifications.
  - 3. Apprentice Open Water Referees may not be listed as certified Officials required as a condition of either a Sanction or Approval.
- F. Apprentice Open Water Referees must work at least 2 meets under the direct supervision of more experienced and fully certified Officials.
- 1. These sessions will be entered into OTS by the Meet Referees, so that a history of session attendance will be available in OTS.
    - a) Apprentice Open Water Referees may want to keep a log of the meets they worked, as a backup. The Meet Referee should sign the Trainee’s log for each session worked.

- G. After completing the previously described steps, to acquire certification as an Apprentice Open Water Referee in STSI, Prospective Apprentice Open Water Referees must send an email to the Officials Chair with the following information:
1. Full name
  2. USA-S membership number
  3. Phone number (with area code) where you can be reached
  4. Desired change – Acquiring position as an Open Water Referee
- H. As soon as the data has been verified, the applicant will be certified as an Open Water Referee.
1. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link within OTS.
- I. Apprentice Open Water Referees must acquire the necessary deck experience within twelve months of being certified as an Apprentice Open Water Referee.
1. Generally, if this time constraint is not met, the Prospective Apprentice Open Water Referee might need to begin the entire Trainee process again.
    - a) Under extraordinary circumstances, this time period can be extended.
      - (i) The extension must be based on a specific reason.
      - (ii) The extension must be recommended by the local Officials Committee Member and approved by the Officials Chair.
      - (iii) The length of the extension is at the discretion of the Officials Chair, but cannot exceed an additional six months.

## **XV. Finish and Relay Takeoff Judges**

- A. USA-S rules require the presence of finish judges at all levels of competition, and they should be utilized whenever possible.

1. Finish judges do not necessarily have to be separately available and/or assigned Officials, e.g., it is common practice for Starters and/or Deck Referees to assist in fulfilling these responsibilities by recording order of finish.
  2. How and under what circumstances they are utilized is at the discretion of the Meet Referee.
- B. Relay takeoff judges are normally assigned from whatever Officials may be available, including Starters and Deck Referees.
1. It is generally not appropriate to assign the Meet Referee as a relay takeoff judge, because of potential overlapping and contradictory areas of responsibility.
  2. In STSI, relay takeoff judge responsibilities are generally viewed as extensions of the Stroke and Turn Judge's domain.

## **XVI. Chief Judges**

- A. In STSI, there is no separate category defined for Chief Judges, nor is there a progression or formal certification process.
1. They must, therefore, come from the ranks of Stroke and Turn Judges, Starters, Deck Referees, and Meet Referees.
- B. To run meets effectively and efficiently, Chief Judges should be used at all meets, if possible. In particular, Chief Judges are essential members of the deck team at larger and/or higher level competitions.
- C. Meet Referees are strongly advised to select only well-experienced and highly qualified individuals for this role.
1. Ideally, they should be certified as Deck or Meet Referees, but circumstances and resource assets may dictate otherwise.

## **XVII. Minimum Participation and Other Recurring Requirements**

- A. The following table summarizes the steps that are necessary to retain Official certification in STSI. Note that for the purposes of accumulating Meet Referee sessions, a meet can be structured such that the named Meet Referee can designate one official to act in the capacity of co-Meet Referee and carry out duties typical of the Meet Referee. For example, the co-Meet Referee can coordinate operations with the Deck Referee(s) and Administrative Official(s), with the agreement and direct supervision of the named Meet Referee. Ultimately, the named Meet Referee has the final responsibility and authority for the operation of the meet.

## STEPS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN OFFICIAL STATUS

<b>Position</b>	<b>Memberships</b>	<b>APT and BGC</b>	<b>Biennial Tests or Meeting</b>	<b>Minimum Participation</b>
Meet Referee	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	8 sessions per year: at least 1 as Meet Referee
Meet Referee/ Administrative Referee	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	8 sessions per year: at least 1 as Meet Referee and 1 as Administrative Official
Deck Referee	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	8 sessions per year: at least 6 as Starter or higher with at least 4 as Deck Referee and 2 as Starter
Starter	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	8 sessions per year: at least 4 as Starter
Stroke and Turn Judge	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	8 sessions per year
Deck Referee, Starter, or Stroke and Turn Judge AND Administrative Official	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	The required number of sessions for the respective wet-side certification, with at least 2 as AO

Administrative Official	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	6 sessions per year
Open Water Judge	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	1 meet per year
Open Water Referee	Maintain USA-S and STSI membership	Renew APT annually and BGC every 2 years	Take appropriate tests or attend approved clinic	1 meet per year

- B. In order to maintain an active, current certification in STSI, all Officials must meet the following requirements:
1. Maintain their USA-S and STSI memberships
  2. Renew their Level II BGC every two years
  3. Renew their APT every year
  4. Take and pass the current USA-S Officials examination(s) specific to her/his certification OR certified Officials can attend an Existing Officials Clinic that has been approved by the Officials Chair.
    - a) Within one week of the conclusion of this Clinic, a list of attendees must be entered into OTS by the Clinician.
    - b) Officials can check their Clinic attendance in OTS.
  5. Meet the minimum participation requirements outlined in the section titled [Minimum Participation and Other Recurring Requirements](#).
    - a) Sessions accumulated as a Trainee are not counted toward the minimum participation requirements.
  6. As Officials work sessions at meets, the Meet Referee will enter the number of sessions and the positions worked into OTS, so that a history of session attendance will be available in OTS.
- C. Officials may view and/or print a current certification card at any time by clicking the "My Certification Card" link within OTS.
- D. Meet Referees are specified by name in the meet information, as are their addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.
1. The currency of their USA-S registration and LSC certification are part and parcel of the sanctioning/approval process.
  2. Should the specified Meet Referee fail to appear at a meet without ensuring the presence of a properly certified replacement, and advising the meet host of this change, the Meet Referee's credentials will be immediately revoked.

- a) The offending individual will immediately be reclassified as a Deck Referee and will no longer be allowed to function as a Meet Referee for a minimum of 365 days, dated from the day of Meet Referee de-certification.
- b) Exceptions may be made for acute illness and/or injury on the part of the Meet Referee, or an immediate family member, as determined by the Officials Committee.
- c) Re-instatement as a Meet Referee will require petitioning the Officials Committee in writing.
  - (i) Re-instatement will not then be automatic but rather at the discretion of the Officials Committee, requiring a majority vote.
- d) A second violation will result in permanent de-certification as an Official in STSI with no possibility of reinstatement.

### **XVIII. Fees, Terms, and Other Costs**

- A. All membership fees and certain other expenses may be tax deductible, provided complete and accurate records are maintained.
- B. The annual USA-S membership fee is subject to upward revision every year. It is specified within the Non-athlete Annual Registration Form (available on the STSI Web site at <http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp?tabid=99565&team=szstxlc#Documents>).
- 1. Memberships expire each year on December 31.
- 2. Renewals may be submitted any time between September 1 and December 31.
  - a) Early submissions are strongly recommended to avoid the possibility of insurance lapses.
- 3. Lifetime Memberships are available for a one-time payment. Please go to the USA Swimming Web site for additional information.
- C. USA-S Registration Fee Reimbursement

1. Beginning on September 1, and extending until the last day of February of the following year, STSI will reimburse STSI Certified Officials the full amount of their annual USA Swimming registration, if requested to do so, provided the Official meets the following requirements:
  - a) Must be a current member, in good standing, of USA-S. This status must be verifiable via OTS.
  - b) Must be currently registered with STSI and certified in one of the following categories. This status must be verifiable via OTS.
    - (i) Meet Referee
    - (ii) Deck Referee
    - (iii) Referee/Non-starter
    - (iv) Starter
    - (v) Stroke and Turn Judge
    - (vi) Administrative Official
    - (vii) Stroke and Turn Trainees and Administrative Official Trainees are not eligible for this registration reimbursement until fully certified.
  - c) Must have successfully passed a USA-S Level II BGC. This status must be verifiable via OTS.
  - d) Must have successfully completed USA-S APT. This status must be verifiable via OTS.
  - e) Must have successfully completed the required number of meet sessions, as specified in the section titled [Minimum Participation and Other Recurring Requirements](#) of this document. This status must be verifiable via OTS.
  - f) Submit a reimbursement request, via email, to the STSI Treasurer. The email should include a request for reimbursement of the USA-S registration fee along with a mailing address.

- g) Submit any request for reimbursement in such a manner as to ensure receipt by the LSC Treasurer by the last day of February.
  - h) Allow up to 45 days for processing of requests.
  - i) Cash any reimbursement check within 90 days of its execution date.
2. As an alternative to this reimbursement, Officials are allowed to submit their registration forms without a check, and STSI will directly make the payment for their USA-S membership fee. However, to do this, the following criteria must be met when the Official submits the USA-S Membership form:
- a) Be currently registered with STSI and certified in one of the following categories. This status must be verifiable via OTS.
    - (i) Meet Referee
    - (ii) Deck Referee
    - (iii) Referee/Non-starter
    - (iv) Starter
    - (v) Stroke and Turn Judge
    - (vi) Administrative Official
    - (vii) Stroke and Turn Trainees and Administrative Official Trainees are not eligible for this procedure.
  - b) Must have successfully passed a USA-S Level II BGC. This status must be verifiable via OTS.
  - c) Must have successfully completed USA-S APT. This status must be verifiable via OTS.
  - d) Must have successfully completed the required number of meet sessions, as specified in the section titled [Minimum Participation and Other Recurring Requirements](#) of this document. This status must be verifiable via OTS.

D. STSI Officials biennial (every 2 years) membership/certification

1. STSI Officials memberships/certifications expire on December 31 of each even-numbered year.
  2. Renewals may be submitted anytime between September 1 and December 31 of each even-numbered year.
  3. If the membership (and its associated certification) is not renewed by January 31 of the year following expiration, both the certification and the membership will be lost and the individual might need to begin the entire process again, at the discretion of the LSC Officials Committee, to include any, or all, of the following:
    - a) Re-entry into the certification program
    - b) Possible re-progression through the categories
    - c) Possible re-examination
  4. Requests for a waiver of the policies concerning lapsed membership/certification must be submitted to the LSC Officials Chair in writing, in a timely manner, and will not be considered except in the most unusual of circumstances.
    - a) Requests for such waiver will require a 60% vote of the Officials Committee in order to be granted.
- E. USA-S Level II Background Check (BGC) Fee Reimbursement
1. All active and certified Officials, including Trainees, must undergo a Level II criminal background check, as directed by USA-S.
  2. The cost of a Level II BGC must be paid by the individual at the time the background check is initiated.
    - a) When an individual successfully "passes" a Level II BGC, 100% of all costs will be reimbursed by STSI, if desired.
      - (i) Trainees may not submit a request for reimbursement of Level II BGC costs until they have successfully been certified as a Stroke and Turn Judge or Administrative Official.
      - (ii) Individuals are not eligible for reimbursement of any costs incurred until they "pass" a Level II BGC.

- b) To request reimbursement, the official must forward the email indicating the Level II BGC was passed to the STSI Treasurer. The email should include a request for reimbursement of the Level II BGC fee along with a mailing address.
- c) Reimbursements must be submitted within 60 days of successfully completing the Level II BGC, except for Trainees, who must submit their reimbursement request within 60 days of becoming a Stroke and Turn Judge or Administrative Official.

## **XIX. Dress Code and Appearance**

- A. The “normal” or “default” deck uniform in STSI is white polo shirts and khaki trousers, skirts, Bermuda-length shorts or capris. The meet uniform to be worn by Officials should be indicated in the meet information.
- B. This color scheme may be altered at the discretion of the Meet Referee.
  - 1. For championship-style/prelim-final meets, it is likely that a different uniform will be specified for prelims than for finals.
  - 2. The relevant meet information will normally include any such specifications.
- C. Jeans, “short” shorts or skirts, and flip-flops are not appropriate at any time or under any circumstances.
- D. All-white tennis or gym shoes should be worn for all meets.

## **XX. Accouterments**

- A. Once a new official has registered with both USA-S and STSI, has passed the Level II Background Check, and has completed the Athlete Protection Training, they will be issued one white polo shirt and nametag.
- B. All STSI Officials are required to prominently display their Officials Certification Card from OTS when performing duties as an Official.
  - 1. At some high-level competitions this requirement may be waived.

2. The Meet Referee is responsible for ensuring that all Officials are current members of USA-S and STSI (or, for visiting Officials, their own LSC), that all have a current Level II BGC acknowledged by USA-S, and that all have successfully completed the USA-S APT.
  - a) The online Officials Roster is normally kept up-to-date in this regard.
  - b) However, Officials are required to have their USA-S ID cards in their possession at all times when on deck.
- C. As mentioned, nametags are provided at no cost to new STSI certified Officials.
  1. The acquisition of an individual nametag may take up to 30 days.
  2. Replacement nametags may be obtained at a cost of \$10 each.
  3. The wearing of nametags while on deck at all competitions is strongly encouraged.

## **XXI. Meets with an Inadequate Number of Officials**

- A. In any Sanctioned or Approved USA-S competition, when there is an inadequate number of Officials present for the start of one or more sessions of a meet, as specified by rule, the Meet Referee may elect to either conduct or cancel the meet or session.
- B. Partial sessions may not be considered, i. e., if an inadequate number of Officials, by rule, are available for the start of a session, that is the circumstance considered to exist for the entire session, regardless of how many Officials may eventually become available at a later time during the session.
- C. Should the Meet Referee elect to conduct the session with an inadequate number of Officials as specified by rule at the start of the session, the following will apply:
  1. Insurance coverage remains in force
  2. The session can be scored
  3. Awards can be made
  4. Times cannot be entered into the SWIMS National Database

- a) Therefore, times cannot be used for qualifying entries for other STSI, TSA (TAGS), or USA-S (Sectionals, Junior National Championship, National Championship) competition.
  5. When a meet is divided into sessions, only times from sessions during which the requisite number of Officials were present can be entered into SWIMS.
  6. It is the responsibility of the Administrative Official to ensure that only eligible times from sessions as previously described are forwarded for uploading to SWIMS.
  7. Prior to the start of the impacted session(s), the Meet Referee must inform coaches from all teams attending a meet when the results from one or more sessions will not be entered into SWIMS due to an inadequate number of Officials.
- D. It is the Meet Referee's responsibility to ensure that only properly credentialed Officials are allowed to work as Officials at Sanctioned or Approved USA-S competitions in STSI.
1. While OTS is the authoritative method for maintaining and tracking key information for STSI Officials, the Meet Referee may consider the online roster to be accurate, in that individuals listed are currently registered with USA-S, properly certified in the indicated capacity as an Official by STSI, and have a current Level II BGC and APT.
  2. Individuals in STSI who are not listed on the STSI Officials Roster, or Officials from other LSCs, are welcome to officiate at STSI meets when they have the appropriate credentials or the appropriate information can be verified through OTS.

## **XXII. STSI Officials Web Page**

- A. An STSI Officials Web page (<http://www.stswim.org/TabGeneric.jsp?tabid=99565&team=szstxlc>) is accessible from the STSI Web site (<http://www.stswim.org/Home.jsp?team=szstxlsc>).
1. The home page includes a general information and news section that is updated as necessary.
  2. There are also a number of forms, etc. of general interest to, and for use by, Officials.

3. It is prudent for STSI Officials to periodically check this Web site to keep abreast of activities regarding officiating in STSI.
- B. A roster of all active and credentialed Officials, including Trainees, is also accessible from the Officials home page.
1. The roster is updated in near real time, as necessary, to maintain currency.
  2. For the roster to be of the greatest possible value, errors of omission and commission, and requests for additions or deletions, should be promptly forwarded to the LSC Officials Chair.

### **XXIII. Officiating Etiquette and Philosophy**

- A. The primary objective of officiating is to promote fairness by consistently applying the rules and regulations across all swimmers, regardless of age, gender, team, or swim ability.
- B. It is key that Officials at a meet work as a team to provide the athletes with the best possible competitive opportunities.
- C. Officials should show respect for the sport and the athletes by always looking and acting professionally.
- D. USA Swimming Rules and Regulations are to be enforced as written.
1. Remember that swim Officials do not judge style. Rather, they only determine if a swimmer conforms to the rules.
  2. STSI has certain administrative policies that are in addition to the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.
  3. In addition, official interpretations will be given where doubt exists by contacting either the STSI Officials Chair or your local member of the Officials Committee.
- E. In all cases, the Meet Referee is the final authority on deck. If a call you make is overruled, do not worry about it. It happens to all of us. Accept it, and just move forward.
- F. In addition, there is nothing wrong with withdrawing a disqualification. If you are unsure of your call or have second thoughts, simply say so, and withdraw your call.

- G. Officials must never “warn” swimmers. Either a violation occurred or it did not. A warning constitutes coaching, and Officials are present to officiate—not to coach.
  - 1. It is axiomatic in swim officiating that the benefit of the doubt always goes to the swimmer.
- H. Special attention must be given to Trainees in any kind of supervised status. Sound, knowledgeable training will help ensure the development and maintenance of competent and reliable Officials.
- I. It is the duty and responsibility of the Meet Referee to ensure that fully qualified, competent Officials are assigned to all positions.
- J. Officials must exercise great care to ensure that not even a perception of bias is exhibited
- K. Officials must never engage in cell phone conversations while working as an Official on deck.
  - 1. It is preferable that cell phones not be visibly carried while working as an Official on deck.
  - 2. In an effort to always protect our athletes, the presence or use of cell phones, smart phones, or any other devices capable of producing audio, photographic, or video recordings is strictly and specifically prohibited from locker rooms, restrooms, or changing areas at all times.
- L. Officials should avoid having any but the briefest discussion with coaches concerning violations, disqualifications, judgment calls, or rule interpretations.
  - 1. Coaches who persist should be referred to the Meet Referee or Administrative Official, as appropriate, and must never be permitted to become hostile, arrogant, or abusive.
    - a) Such incidents should be promptly referred to the Meet Referee and, if appropriate, to the LSC Officials Chair.
  - 2. Parents or other spectators must not be allowed to interfere with or question calls and/or decisions made by Officials.
    - a) Such incidents should be promptly referred to the Meet Referee and, if appropriate, to the LSC Officials Chair

- M. Officials should arrive at least 45 minutes before the start of the meet, appropriately dressed and ready to officiate, or make other arrangements with the Meet Referee prior to the meet.
  - 1. Officials should always check the meet information to see if the Meet Referee requests that they arrive prior to this.
  - 2. Officials should report to the Meet Referee for the Officials briefing and to receive assignments.
- N. Officials should not leave the deck without notifying the appropriate individual (Chief Judge, Deck Referee, or Meet Referee, as appropriate).
- O. Meet Referees should make a conscious effort to rotate deck assignments during a meet in order to preclude boredom from repetitive routine, to provide adequate breaks, and to provide Officials with the opportunity to grow and expand their expertise and capabilities.
  - 1. However, Officials should refrain from complaining about assignments, because specific position assignments are at the Meet Referee's discretion.
- P. To remain competent as an Official, it is necessary to remain current on all rules, regulations, and interpretations.
- Q. There are rarely enough Officials at any given meet, and help is always needed and appreciated. STSI Officials, regardless of their level of certification, are welcome and invited to work at any and all meets in the LSC
  - 1. However, they should not expect to be specifically "invited" to work at meets.
  - 2. Officials should contact the Meet Referee as early as possible if they plan on working at a meet, so that the Meet Referee can plan accordingly.
    - a) Officials should also indicate any schedule limitations they have (e.g., sessions they can/cannot work, if they need to leave a particular session early, etc.).

3. However, for some meets (e.g., Nationals, Juniors, Grand Prix, Sectionals, and TAGS), it is likely that an Officials application process will be utilized. The need to complete an application, and the location of this application, will be indicated in the meet information.
4. It is incumbent on each individual Official to keep informed about which meets are being held at which venues and when.
5. All meets in the LSC (and a few outside) have their meet information posted on one or more Web sites, including the STSI Web site ([www.stswim.org](http://www.stswim.org)).
6. At any time that additional information and/or clarification is needed, the Meet Referee (and associated contact information) is listed in the meet information. One should never hesitate to make contact.

#### **XXIV. National Certifications**

- A. According to USA-S, the overall mission of the National Certification Program is *"to develop Officials who are competent, current and consistent from the LSC level meet to the highest level in our sport through a progressive training program based on an accumulation of experience acquired by specific meet attendance, mentoring and constructive evaluation."*
- B. Even for those who have no interest in working at a national-level meet, the National Certification Program can be very valuable as a learning tool.
- C. The National Officials Certification Program is administered by the USA-S Officials Committee.
- D. Certification at any level requires a combination of several things, including evaluations, local participation at meets, continuing education, and the training and mentoring of other Officials.
- E. There are three levels of Certification for each of the following five positions: Stroke and Turn Judge, Chief Judge, Starter, Deck Referee, and Administrative Referee:
  1. N1: Local, LSC certification in the specific position—recognizes that an Official is capable of working any local, LSC meet.

2. N2: The first National level for a position—recognizes that an Official is experienced and has been evaluated as capable of working the position at Sectional, Zone, Grand Prix, and similar higher profile meets.
  3. N3: The second National level for a position—recognizes that an Official has the experience, skills, and knowledge to be considered for selection to work National Championship level meets in the position.
- F. Evaluations can only be done at Officials Qualifying Meets (OQMs). Attempts will be made to hold two or more OQM meets in South Texas every year
- G. For more information about the National Certification Program, contact the STSI Officials Chair or your local Officials Committee Member, or check the online site at <http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=1515&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>.

## **XXV. National Time Verification (NTV) Program**

- A. The NTV Program is managed entirely by USA-S, with the support of NTV Chairs in each LSC.
- B. USA-S/STSI Certified Referees who are Meet Referees for high school and/or collegiate meets that have been approved for Observation by USA-S, should familiarize themselves with the operational aspects of the program by contacting the LSC NTV Chair or visiting <http://www.usaswimming.org/DesktopDefault.aspx?TabId=544&Alias=Rainbow&Lang=en>.

Prepared by: The Officials Committee, represented by Trey Prinz, Officials Chair, South Texas Swimming, Inc.

Date approved: June 15, 2013

Approved by: The South Texas Swimming, Inc. Board of Directors, represented by Frank Swigon, General Chair, South Texas Swimming, Inc.

Date approved: June 15, 2013