



2022 Fall Sports Information Swimming Rules and Guidelines

COMPETITION DATES AND LOCATIONS

- **Sunday, October 30, 2022 – Corvallis**
Osborn Aquatic Center (NOTE: This is a 25-meter pool)
1940 NW Highland Drive
Corvallis, OR 97330
Participating local programs: Benton, Cottage Grove, Curry, Douglas, Eugene/Springfield, Jackson, Josephine, Klamath, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, South Coast.
- **Sunday, November 6, 2022 – Baker City**
SAM-O-SWIM Center (NOTE: This is a 25-yard pool)
580 Baker Street
Baker City, Oregon 97814
Participating local programs: Baker, Grant, Hermiston/Pendleton, Milton-Freewater, Union, (SOWA Tri-Cities and Walla & SOID Boise may be invited as well).
- **Sunday, November 6, 2022 – Beaverton**
Tualatin Hills Parks & Rec (THPRD) Howard M. Terpenning Aquatic Center (NOTE: This is a 25-meter pool)
15707 SW Walker Rd.
Beaverton, OR 97006
Participating local programs: Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, High Desert, Hood River, Jefferson, Multnomah, Polk, Tillamook, Wasco/Sherman, Washington, Yamhill.
- **There will be NO state competition for aquatics in 2022**

DEADLINE DATES FOR PAPERWORK & ROSTERS TO BE SUBMITTED TO SOOR STATE OFFICE

- Fall Season Medical Deadline – Monday, September 6, 2022
- Swimming Sports Rosters for Corvallis – Monday, September 26, 2022
- Swimming Team Rosters for Baker & Beaverton – Monday, October 3, 2022
- Swimming Team Rosters for Corvallis – Monday, October 10, 2022
- Swimming Team Rosters for Baker & Beaverton – Monday, October 17, 2022

RULES

The official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics Oregon swimming competitions. These rules are based upon the USA Swimming rules (www.usaswimming.org). USA Swimming rules shall be employed except when in conflict with the official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules. In such cases, the official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules shall apply.

COMPETITION REMINDERS

- **Each athlete may enter 2 individual events and 1 relay unless athlete is being entered in developmental events. If an athlete is entered into developmental events, he/she can enter 2 individual events but no relay event.**
 - A complete list of Special Olympics Oregon events can be found on page 2 of this packet.

2022 Special Olympics Oregon Fall Season Swimming Rules and Guidelines

The official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics Oregon swimming competitions. These rules are based upon the USA Swimming rules (www.usaswimming.org). USA Swimming rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules. In such cases, the official Special Olympics Oregon Sports Rules shall apply.

SECTION A - OFFICIAL SPECIAL OLYMPICS OREGON EVENTS OFFERED

- 1) Developmental events** – all events will be conducted in shallow end of pool at competitions. Athletes in development events may NOT participate in relay events.
 - a) 10m assisted swim
 - b) 15m walk
 - c) 15m kick board (newer event)
 - d) 15m flotation
 - e) 25m flotation
- 2) Cross-over event** – to help move athletes from developmental to traditional events
 - a) 15m unassisted swim (athletes participating in this event may also choose either the 25m freestyle event or 1 additional developmental event. Athletes who “cross over” may NOT participate in a relay)
- 3) Traditional events**
 - a) 25m backstroke
 - b) 25m breaststroke
 - c) 25m butterfly
 - d) 25m freestyle
 - e) 50m backstroke
 - f) 50m breaststroke
 - g) 50m butterfly
 - h) 50m freestyle
 - i) 100m backstroke
 - j) 100m breaststroke
 - k) 100m freestyle
 - l) 100m individual medley
 - m) 200m backstroke
 - n) 200m breaststroke
 - o) 200m freestyle
 - p) 200m individual medley
- 4) Relay events**
 - a) 4x25m freestyle relay
 - b) 4x25m medley relay
 - c) 4x25m Unified freestyle relay
 - d) 4x50m freestyle relay
 - e) 4x50m medley relay
 - f) 4x50m Unified medley relay
 - g) 4x100m freestyle relay

SECTION B – REGISTRATION RULES AND REMINDERS

Registration Reminders

- 1) Athletes competing in traditional events can enter 2 individual events and 1 relay.
- 2) Athletes competing in any developmental event (even if they crossover) may not enter a relay.
- 3) Cross-over event – to help move athletes from developmental to traditional events
 - a) 15m unassisted swim (athletes participating in this event may also choose either the 25m freestyle event or 1 additional developmental event. Athletes who “cross over” may NOT participate in a relay)
- 4) For swim events, record all times as follows: Minutes: Seconds.Tenths Example: an athlete swims the 100m freestyle in 3 minutes and 32.6 seconds. His time is recorded or registered as 3:32.6. On the registration form, it would a 3 in the “min” column, 32 in the “sec” column and 6 in the “tenths” column.

Relay events

- 1) Only 5 names may be entered on a traditional relay team (4 primary athletes and 1 alternate). **NOTE:** None of these athletes may be listed on any other relay team.
- 2) For Unified relay teams, up to 6 teammates may be listed. A minimum of 2 athletes and 2 Partners and maximum of 3 athletes and 3 Partners may be listed (allowing for one athlete alternate and one Partner alternate). **NOTE:** None of these individuals may be listed on any other relay team.
- 3) An alternate may be listed for only one relay team.
- 4) Relay team registrations cannot be changed at regional competitions.
- 5) If 2 relay teams from the same delegation in the same event do not have enough swimmers they may NOT combine to form 1 relay team.
- 6) Assistant coaches ARE permitted to serve a dual-role as unified partners on relay teams (however, on registration form they can only be identified as unified partners).
- 7) For safety purposes, only the first swimmer will be permitted to dive start on a relay team. All remaining relay team members must start in the water.
- 8) Relay teams who do not have enough swimmers (fewer than 4 who were listed on that team) will result in a scratch. No exceptions.

SECTION C - COMPETITION ATTIRE

- 1) Athletes must wear USA Swimming-approved swimwear. Only swimsuits may be worn for competition.
- 2) Females should wear one-piece racing suits.
- 3) No competitor shall be permitted to use or wear any device that may aid his speed, buoyancy or endurance during a competition (except flotation races) such as webbed gloves, flippers, fins, etc.).
- 4) Goggles may be worn.
- 5) For flotation events, each athlete is responsible for providing his/her own flotation device. The device must be of the body wraparound type such that if the athlete were to not be able to hold onto the device, the device would still support the athlete with his/her face out of the water.

SECTION D - EQUIPMENT

- 1) Starting devices may include the following: whistle, tone, or buzzer. Athletes with hearing impairments may receive a hand signal or touch/tap starts from a designated official.
- 2) The timing system may be an electronic system, touch pads, and/or stopwatches. At least one watch per lane is required with the goal to have 3 watches per lane. NOTE: All regional competitions will use stopwatches.
- 3) Flags should be located 5m from each end of the pool to indicate the distance to the finish, especially for backstroke and medley events. Flags should not be removed during competition or training sessions.

SECTION E – OFFICIALS

- 1) The Meet Referee in cooperation with the Swimming Rules Committee shall have the authority to adjust these rules on a case-by-case basis for the safety and well-being of an athlete. The Meet Referee may intervene in the competition at any stage to ensure that the appropriate regulations are observed, and shall adjudicate all protests related to the competition in progress.
- 2) The Meet Referee shall have the discretion to allow for certain modifications/interpretations of the current technical rules based upon a physical disability characteristic. Such interpretation shall not give advantage over another swimmer.
- 3) Stroke interpretations will be concerned with the action a limb(s) is performing. The Stroke Judge shall be concerned with what action the arm or leg action constitutes.
- 4) The Meet Referee shall have full control and authority over all officials, approve their assignments, and instruct them regarding all Special Olympics features or regulations related to the competitions. He/she shall enforce all rules and decisions of the Official Special Olympics Oregon Rule book and USA Swimming rules and shall decide all questions relating to the actual conduct of the meet, the final settlement of which is not otherwise covered by these rules.
- 5) Officials may include the Meet Director, Meet Referee, Stroke and Turn Judges, Chief Timekeeper, Timekeepers, Starter, and Assistant Starters.
- 6) Assistant Starters may be allowed to assist a swimmer during their start if the swimmer has a hearing or vision impairment.

SECTION F – COACHES AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

- 1) Coaches must stay in defined coaches' areas. Athletes are subject to disqualification if coaches do not adhere to the official's instructions, Special Olympics Oregon rules, and USA Swimming rules.
- 2) Coaches are responsible for knowing and understanding the rules of the sport, not only the modified rules in this manual, but also NGB rules. The National Governing Body of Rules for Special Olympics Oregon Swimming is USA Swimming.
- 3) Coaches must make sure that all swimmers shall report to the Clerk of Course (Head Stager) in the Staging Area no later than the check-in time designated in the Coaches' Handbook or event schedule.
- 4) Protests relating to matters which developed during the conduct of the competition must be made in writing to the Meet Referee at once and not later than 30 minutes after a result has been announced.

SECTION G – DIVISIONING

- 1) Athletes will compete in one of three age groups:
 - a) Youth: ages 15 and under (May be split further into 8-11 and 12-15 if numbers permit)
 - b) Adult: ages 16 and older
 - c) Open age group: reserved for combining age groups to meet the required minimum number of competitors or teams (3 or more) in a division, or to ensure quality competition.
- 2) Note: The oldest member of a relay team will determine the age division of the team. It is suggested that delegations form teams that are age appropriate. Male, female, and co-ed teams will be divisioned together unless there are enough teams within a category to create equitable divisions.
- 3) Athletes are divisioned for competition based on their best training entry scores.

SECTION H – COMPETITION TECHNICAL RULES AND MODIFICATIONS (Individual strokes, relays and developmental events)

All competitive swimming events held under USA Swimming sanction shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules, which are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and promote uniformity in the sport so that no swimmer shall obtain unfair advantage over another. Please see Appendix A – USA Swimming Disqualification Report on page 12 of this packet for reference.

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. Safety considerations should be addressed by the swimmer, the swim coach, the swim club and the local public entity or pool owner

where events are held.

Starting procedures

- 1) Swimmers will be escorted into starting area by competition officials and will be instructed to take a starting position by verbal cues from the meet referee, starter or other competition official.
- 2) When the swimmers and officials are ready, the Referee shall signal with an outstretched arm to the Starter that the swimmers are under the Starter's control.
- 3) 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 on the deck, or, in backstroke and medley relay events, assume the backstroke starting position. **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.
- 4) Athletes with hearing or sight impairments may receive a hand signal or touch/tap from a designated official or nominated person approved by the Meet Referee.

False starts

1) Traditional events

- a) For traditional events, a disqualification is levied for the first false start. **The race continues and the athlete(s) involved in the false start will be informed at the conclusion of the race.**
- b) In rare occasions, such as if a false start was determined to be the fault of the starter or if multiple swimmers false start and it is unclear of the initial offender(s), then a recall of the race may be employed. This will be determined by the meet referee in consultation with the starter.

2) Developmental Events

- a) In developmental events, all false starts will be recalled. Only if an athlete continues to offend will a disqualification be levied.

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. 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.

- a) 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.
- b) 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 after each turn, a single downward butterfly kick, **which must be** followed by a breaststroke kick is permitted **during or at the completion of the first arm pull.** Following which, all movements of the legs shall be simultaneous and in the same horizontal plane without alternation movement.

- a) The feet must be turned outwards during the propulsive part of the kick. A scissors, flutter or downward butterfly is 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 simultaneously at, above, or below the water level. 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.

BREAKSTROKE INTERPRETATION

The official interpretation for the changes to the breaststroke is that during, or at the end of the arm pull-down of the first stroke after the start and after each turn, a single downward butterfly kick is allowed, but not required, followed by a breaststroke kick. During the pull-down, if a downward butterfly kick is taken, it must be followed by a breaststroke kick. It is not permissible to take only a downward butterfly kick without then taking a normal breaststroke kick. The downward butterfly kick is not permissible prior to the arm pull-down. In addition, there is now a requirement for all movements of the legs to be "in the same horizontal plane and without alternating movement". This was previously not included in the rules.

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. Both arms must be brought forward over the water and pulled back simultaneously.

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 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 simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface.

Backstroke

1) Start

The swimmer shall line up in the water facing the starting end, with both hands placed on the gutter or on the starting grip. **Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes over the lip of the gutter before or after the start 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 shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15m (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 a continuous single arm pull or a continuous simultaneous double arm pull may be used to initiate the turn. Once the body has left the position on the back, any kick or arm pull must be part of the continuous turning action. 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.

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 15m (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.

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.

3) Turns

- a) Intermediate turns within each stroke shall conform to the turn rules for that 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:
 - i) Butterfly to backstroke - The swimmer must touch as described in the Butterfly guidelines. 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.
 - ii) 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.
 - iii) Breaststroke to freestyle - The swimmer must touch as described in the Breaststroke guidelines. Once a legal touch has been made, the swimmer may turn in any manner.

4) Finish

The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of his/her person touches the wall after the prescribed distance.

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 shall govern where applicable. At the end of each leg, the finish rule for each stroke applies in each case.

3) 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 touchplate 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. Allowances will be made for athletes who have difficulty leaving the pool from their lane. 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.
This rule is in effect for all Special Olympics athletes who cannot physically exit the water from their lane under their own power. All swimmers who can exit the water on their own should be encouraged to do so.
- f) In relay races involving in-the-water starts (all Special Olympics Oregon relays since only the first swimmer is permitted to dive start), 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.

Modifications for events

- 1) Standing on the bottom during Freestyle events or during the Freestyle portion of the medley events shall not disqualify a competitor, but he/she shall not walk.
- 2) Standing upon the bottom in the racing course is allowed only for the purpose of resting. A swimmer who walks on or jumps from the bottom shall be disqualified.
- 3) A coach or official may guide the swimmer by voice only. The aid is not allowed to touch the swimmer from the time of the starting signal until all swimmers have completed the race.
(The exception to this is the 10m assisted event. In this race, the coach may assist the athlete in any form necessary, except with the athlete's forward movement.)
- 4) Assistant starters may be used to assist athletes in maintaining their positions at the starting line.
- 5) Swimmers may be assisted from the water upon request.

Developmental events

These events provide meaningful competition for athletes with lower ability levels. In all developmental events coaches will be allowed to give verbal assistance to swimmers from the side or end of the pool as long as they do not interfere with the judges or timers.

For all developmental events – Standing on the bottom of the racing course is allowed for all races for the purpose of resting. Walking on or jumping from the bottom must disqualify the competitor.

1) 10m assisted swim races

- a) Each athlete is responsible for having his/her own coach/assistant. The assistant may touch, or direct the athlete, but cannot assist with the athlete's forward movement. If the coach is in the water with the athlete, the swimmer cannot use a flotation device unless absolutely necessary for safety reasons. If a flotation device is used it must meet the specifications listed below.

2) 15m and 25m floatation races

- a) Each athlete is responsible for his/her own flotation device. The device must be of the body wrap around type such that if the athlete were to not be able to hold on to the device, the device would still support the athlete with the face out of the water. (Flotation devices such as kickboards, inner tubes, or floats that wrap around the arms are not acceptable for use at any time).
- b) A coach may enter the water to position the athlete at the starting line, but cannot touch the swimmer once the race starts. Coaches may move ahead of the swimmer and verbally encourage and coach the swimmer from the water as long as the coach does not interfere with their swimmer or go into the lane of another swimmer.

3) 15m kick board

- a) Start—The swimmer must be in the water with one hand placed touching the pool deck edge, or, with both hands holding the kick board with the swimmers back against the pool edge.
- b) Race—Both hands should remain on the kick board at all times. The swimmer may swim in a Prone or Supine position. Arm stroking is not permissible. Standing on the bottom of the pool for the purpose of resting is permissible but no walking or jumping is permitted.
- c) Finish—the finish will take place when the kick board touched the pool edge at the finish line, or when some part of the swimmers body touches the pool edge at the finish point. The swimmer must have one hand on the board at the finish.
- d) Type of Kick Board permitted:
 - i) Length – maximum length is 470 mm
 - ii) Width – maximum width is 330 mm
 - iii) Thickness – maximum thickness is 45 mm
- e) Material – a material that provide appropriate flotation
- f) Athlete is NOT permitted to wear a flotation device in the kickboard event
- g) This is an unassisted event. No lane helper will be permitted in the pool with the swimmer.

4) 15m unassisted swim

- a) Athletes must swim the full distance with no assistance, including no flotation devices.
- b) A coach may enter the water with the athlete, but must back away from the swimmer prior to the start of the race, and cannot provide any assistance during the race. Coaches must stay behind the swimmer during the race.

SECTION I – GUIDELINES FOR OFFICIATING SWIMMERS WITH DISABILITIES

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 mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This section contains guidelines and suggestions for making such modifications.

1) Responsibilities

- a) Athlete
The athlete (or the athlete's coach) is responsible for notifying the Referee, prior to the competition, of any disability of the athlete. The swimmer/coach shall provide any assistant(s) or equipment (tappers, deck mats, etc.) if required.
- b) Referee
 - i) The Referee's responsibilities include:
 - (1) Inquiring regarding the athlete's needs and determining what modifications will be required.
 - (2) Instructing the Starter and Stroke & Turn officials as to the accommodations to be made for that swimmer.
 - ii) Some of the modifications, which the Referee may make to accommodate the athlete with a disability, are:
 - (1) A change in starting position.
 - (2) Reassignment of lanes within a heat, e.g., exchanging Lanes 2 and 7.
 - (3) Allowing the athlete's assistant(s) on the deck or in the water to assist with a start.
 - iii) Other allowable modifications are further described in this section under the type of disability.

2) Blind and visually impaired

- a) Start
With an audible starting system, no modification is usually required for a blind or visually-impaired swimmer. They may, however, require assistance getting to and on the block. Should they feel insecure starting from the block or deck, an in-the-water start may be allowed.

b) Turns and finishes

A blind or visually-impaired swimmer is permitted to have a "tapper", which is a pole with a soft-tipped end. The swimmer is tapped with the "tapper" as notification of turns and the finish. Sound devices shall not be used. It is the swimmer's responsibility to provide the tapper(s) and operator(s), who shall be positioned within the confines of the swimmer's lane at the ends of the pool.

c) 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.

3) Deaf and hard of hearing

a) Deaf and hard of hearing swimmers require a visual starting signal, i.e., the 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 signals are visible. A false start rope is required in the event of a recall.

4) Intellectual disabilities (from the USA Swimming Rule Book)

a) A deck or in-the-water start is allowable and the 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.

5) Physical disabilities

a) Start

- i) May take longer to assume their starting position
- ii) May not be able to hold onto the starting grips or gutter for a start
- iii) May need assistance on the deck or from in-the-water to maintain a starting position
- iv) May need to assume a modified starting position on the blocks, deck, gutter or in-the-water in order to maintain their balance.
- v) For freestyle, breaststroke and butterfly, a forward start (facing the course) shall be used. The Referee, however, may allow modifications such as the following:
 - (1) The swimmer may start from the front of the block so that a forward step need not be taken
 - (2) The swimmer may start from a sitting position on the block or on the deck
 - (3) The swimmer may assume a starting position in the water, with or without assistance
 - (4) If the swimmer cannot use a hand to maintain contact with the wall, some other part of the body may be used.

b) Stroke and kick

- i) 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.
- ii) 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 in action is simultaneous, it would meet that portion of the rule. No flotation devices should be permitted.

c) Turns and finishes

- i) 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.

d) Relays

- i) 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.

SECTION J –SAFETY RULES AND GUIDELINES

All Special Olympics Swimming training and recreational sessions and competition events shall be conducted in accordance with the following practices, rules and procedures in order to ensure the safety and well-being of all Special Olympics athletes, coaches, and volunteers:

1) Basic rules

- a) There shall be at least one certified lifeguard on duty for every 25 swimmers in the water. Lifeguards must have current lifeguard, CPR, and first aid certificates.
- b) A lifeguard may not be engaged in any other activity while performing his/her duty as a lifeguard. If a coach is also a trained lifeguard, he/she may not coach and guard at the same time – each position is separate.
- c) The sole function of the lifeguard shall be to guard. If no relief lifeguard is available, the pool must be emptied, even for a short duration, when a lifeguard must leave the pool side.
- d) The head coach or event director will review the Emergency Action Plan prior to each occasion.
- e) Athlete medical history forms shall be on site and shall be discussed with the lifeguard or medical personnel on duty in advance of the aquatic activity.
- f) Pool depth must be marked and easily visible.
- g) The minimum depth of the pool shall be 1.52 meters (5 feet) for racing starts from a starting block. A swimmer may dive from the side of the pool without starting block if the depth is at least 1.22 meters (4 feet).
- h) Safety lines must be in place to divide shallow and deep water areas during recreational aquatic activities.
- i) A pool facility shall not be used unless a satisfactory inspection rating is received prior to any Special Olympics participant entering the water.

2) Emergency action plan

An emergency action plan shall be in place prior to any Special Olympics participant entering the water for any reason, be it training, competition or recreation. The original plan should be written and reviewed by the staff on hand. The plan shall include the following:

- a) The procedure for obtaining emergency medical support if a medical doctor, para-professional, or medical support is not present.
- b) The posts and areas of responsibilities for each lifeguard.
- c) The procedure for obtaining weather information or weather watch information, particularly if the event is outside.
- d) The procedure for reporting accidents.
- e) The chain of command in case of a serious accident including who is assigned to talk to the press.
- f) Other items as may be required by local jurisdictions

3) Supervisory personnel requirements

An adequate number of supervisory personnel shall be present at all aquatics sessions, events or recreational activities. The type of personnel will vary in accordance with the following requirements:

- a) Recreational programs
 - i) Enough certified lifeguards to provide a ratio of guards to swimmers of 1 per 25.
- b) Training programs
 - i) Enough certified lifeguards to provide a ratio of guards to swimmers of 1 per 25.
 - ii) Enough coaches (preferably Special Olympics certified) to provide for adequate supervision and training of each athlete.
- c) Competitions
 - i) Enough certified lifeguards to provide a ratio of guards to swimmers of 1 per 25.
 - ii) Enough supervision to provide for a ratio of observer to swimmers of 1 per 2 for those swimmers who are prone to seizures.
 - iii) Enough supervision to provide for a ratio of observer to divers 1 per 10.

4) Responsibilities of the Head Coach or Event Director

The Head Coach or Event Director shall have the overall responsibility for the Special Olympics aquatics practice sessions or events.

- a) Providing an orientation to all aquatics personnel before the Special Olympics session or event.

- b) Coordinating the facility with host agency prior to arrival.
- c) Ensuring that necessary supervisory personnel are available.
- d) Preparing or assuring that an emergency action plan is in place.
- e) Examining the facility to ensure that the minimum quality standards are present in the following areas for each aquatic session or event:
 - i) Safety equipment
 - ii) Traffic patterns
 - iii) Sanitary water conditions
 - iv) Safe environmental factors
 - v) When a beach or lake is used for a Special Olympics aquatics session or event, the Director of Aquatics shall take extra precautions to ensure that safe aquatics practices are followed.
Note: All participants, including athletes, coaches and volunteers who participate in any boating activity, whether in a pool or on open water, are required to wear a certified personal flotation device (PFD) at all times when inside the boat.
- f) Ensuring that lifeguards are aware of Special Olympics athletes who may have a history of seizures.
- g) Medical restrictions exist for some athletes (for example, athletes with Down syndrome who have not been cleared of Atlanto-Axial Instability competing in butterfly, individual medley events and dive starts). Prior to allowing athletes to compete in these events, the Event Director should review the General Rules section on eligibility.
- h) If in the judgment of the referee or competition management an athlete's swimming competence is not appropriate for an event - athlete is not capable of completing the race distance and may even put his/her life in danger – the referee may with the approval of SOOR staff, require a test of swimming competence in any further event.

APPENDIX A –USA SWIMMING DISQUALIFICATION REPORT



DISQUALIFICATION REPORT

EVENT # _____ HEAT _____ LANE _____
SWIMMER _____

BREASTSTROKE

DURING: START _____ SWIM _____ TURN _____ FINISH _____
10 KICK: ALTERNATING _____ BUTTERFLY _____ SCISSORS _____
11 ARMS: NON-SIMULTANEOUS _____ TWO STROKES UNDER _____
NOT IN SAME HORIZONTAL PLANE _____
12 ELBOWS RECOVERED OVER WATER _____
14 CYCLE: HEAD NOT UP _____ DOUBLE PULLS/KICKS _____
15 TOUCH: ONE HAND _____ NON-SIMULTANEOUS _____
16 NOT TOWARD THE BREAST OFF WALL _____
17 OTHER _____

BUTTERFLY

DURING: START _____ SWIM _____ TURN _____ FINISH _____
20 KICK: ALTERNATING _____ BREAST _____ SCISSORS _____
21 ARMS: NON-SIMULTANEOUS _____ UNDERWATER RECOV. _____
23 TOUCH: ONE HAND _____ NON-SIMULTANEOUS _____
24 NOT TOWARD THE BREAST OFF WALL _____
25 HEAD DID NOT BREAK SURFACE BY 15M _____
26 OTHER _____

BACKSTROKE

DURING: START _____ SWIM _____ TURN _____ FINISH _____
30 TOES OVER LIP OF GUTTER AFTER START _____
31 HEAD DID NOT BREAK SURFACE BY 15M _____
32 NOT ON BACK OFF WALL _____
33 NO TOUCH AT TURN _____
34 PAST VERTICAL AT TURN:
NON-CONTINUOUS TURNING ACTION _____
INDEPENDENT KICKS _____ STROKES _____
35 SHOULDERS PAST VERTICAL _____
36 OTHER _____

INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

41 STROKES INFRACTION # _____
42 OUT OF SEQUENCE _____

FREESTYLE

50 NO TOUCH TURN # _____
51 HEAD DID NOT BREAK SURFACE BY 15M _____

RELAYS

70 STROKE INFRACTION # _____ SWIMMER # _____
71 EARLY TAKE OFF SWIMMER # _____
72 CHANGED ORDER: SWIMMER _____ STROKE _____

OTHER

60 FALSE START _____
61 DELAY OF MEET _____
62 DID NOT FINISH _____
63 OTHER _____

JUDGE: _____
(print name clearly)

REFEREE: _____
(print name clearly)

NOTIFIED: _____ SWIMMER _____ COACH _____

rev. 10/5/02

DESK/REFEREE