



# New Coach Requirements

## FAQ

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Do I have to take this test? Do the new coach requirements apply to me?**

The new coach requirements apply to any coach who registered with USA Swimming for the FIRST time after September 1, 1998 (start of our 1999 registration period). A first year coach must pass the New Coach Test prior to registering for his/her second year as a USA Swimming coach member. There is no set test deadline; however your memberships expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. If you don't pass the test prior to December 31<sup>st</sup>, you will not be able to coach until you pass the test and re-register.

### **Has the new coach test changed?**

The revised test is based on the *Progressions for Athlete and Coach Development*, the *Foundations of Coaching Home Study Course*, and the *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations*. The test that you will take is new as of March 15, 2005. It is computer generated drawing from a bank of questions. The order of the answers is randomized. Therefore, each test that is taken will be totally unique to the test-taker.

### **Can I take the test on-line?**

The **only** way to take the test is on-line. Go to the USA Swimming website ([www.usaswimming.org/](http://www.usaswimming.org/)). Go to the "Coaches" tab on the top of any page. From there click on "Coaches Education Requirement" then "Foundations of Coaching Test" on the menu bar on the left to get started.

### **I heard that I need to "Sign In" to take the test. What is that? How do I do that?**

In order to take the "Foundations of Coaching Test" you **must** have a web account with USA Swimming. You can create an account on the USA Swimming home page. You will then need to "sign in" to the website which can be found in the upper right-hand corner of virtually every page. If you try to take the test without properly signing in, instructions will be given to complete the correct "sign in" procedure.

### **How many questions do I need to answer correctly to pass?**

The test is open book. You are allowed to miss up to 20 questions out of 180 to pass the test.

### **How do I know if I passed or failed?**

When you click on "End Test" (shown at the bottom of question #180) your score will be immediately displayed.

### **Can I take the test on paper and mail it in for grading?**

No, but you can print out a copy of the test and fill in your answer sheet at your leisure. (Additional instructions appear on the actual test page.) You would then need to go back online to input your answers and submit the test for grading.

### **What happens if I don't take or fail the test?**

If you fail the test, you will need to retake it. Please note that your next test will be a different computer generated test. You may take the test as many times as necessary in order to pass the test. You must pass the test before you can register for your second year as a USA Swimming Coach member. You will be allowed

to register as a non-athlete member for your second year until you pass the test, but that still means you will not be able to be on deck until you become a coach member. If you are on deck and are not a coach member, you are not covered by insurance and are putting your club at risk.

### **I took the test on-line and passed. What happens now?**

An email will be sent to you and also to your LSC Registration Chair. Your registration will then be updated to "Coach Member." It is highly recommended that you print a copy of the email to save for possible future registration clarification.

### **What does LSC stand for?**

Local Swimming Committee.

### **I'm a new coach but I haven't received the new coach information yet.**

New coach packets are sent out approximately one month after the LSC sends the information to USA Swimming. You should receive your new coach packet within 2-1/2 months of coach registration. If it has been longer than 3 months since you registered for your first year as a USA Swimming Coach member and you have not received your new coach packet, you can request one by calling USA Swimming at 719-866-4578. Please note that some LSCs are mailing the new coach packet out with the coaches' card to ensure the coaches get them in a timelier manner.

**I received this packet but I'm not a new coach.**

You do not have to take the test, however you will need to give your LSC Membership Chair a copy of your old USA Swimming Coach card (from 1998 or before) and ask him/her to change your status in the Membership database. You will need to do this before you register for the upcoming year. If you do not have an old coach card, you may contact the Coach Certification person at USA Swimming (call 719-866-4578.) You will need to provide the **exact** year you were a USA Swimming coach member, the LSC you were in at the time, the name you were registered under at the time and your current LSC. We will attempt to locate you in our archives. This may take up to 3 days. Once we locate you in the archives as a coach prior to 1999, we will contact your current LSC Membership Chair and let him/her know to "grandfather" you in. If we cannot locate you in the archives you will be required to take the new coach test.

**Do I have to purchase the *Progressions for Athlete and Coach Development and the Foundations of Coaching Home Study Course* books?**

Purchasing the books is optional however passing the test without the textbooks is rather difficult. The test is "open book" and covers material from the *Progressions for Athlete and Coach Development*, the *Foundations of Coaching Home Study Course* and the *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations*. The test is separated into sections from the three books. The books may be ordered from the USA Swimming on-line store. On the USA Swimming website, click on the "USA-S Store."

**Who receives the \$20.00 from the purchase of the *Progressions for Athlete and Coach Development and the Foundations of Coaching Home Study Course* books?**

Like most of the programs run by USA Swimming, the new coach requirement program is designed to

break-even or run at a slight loss. When you purchase the books from USA Swimming, the \$20 covers the basic costs (there is also an additional shipping charge). Absolutely no royalties are paid to any of the authors. In fact, one of the conditions of employment at USA Swimming is that all employees (as well as all board of directors and committee members) must sign a conflict of interest form that states that they may not personally profit from any USA Swimming program or service.

**Which version of the *USA Swimming Rules & Regulations* do I need for the test?**

Use the current USA Swimming Rules and Regulations book for the test.

**How do I get the *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations* book?**

As a coach member, USA Swimming will send you a copy of the *Rules and Regulations* free of charge. Generally, you will receive your copy within three months of registration. If you registered over three months ago and still have not received your copy of the rulebook, please contact the Membership Department (719-866-4578) at USA Swimming. The easiest way is to view the *USA Swimming Rules and Regulations* online. Go to the "Volunteers" tab on the USA Swimming website. You can also order a rulebook at the "USA Swimming Store" on the website.

**Will I have to take a test each year now?**

No, there are no plans to have additional educational requirements after the first year. This program is strictly designed to ensure that all new USA Swimming Coach members have a basic level of education before entering their second year of coaching.

**Do I have to be a member of ASCA (the American Swimming Coaches Association) too?**

No. ASCA membership is entirely

optional. By passing the new coach test you are eligible to become ASCA Level 1 certified (by request only – ASCA does not do this automatically). If you would like more information about becoming a member of ASCA, please call 1-800-356-2722.

**What if I'd like for the test to count toward ASCA Level 1 Certification?**

As you begin the test there is a check box that asks, "Are you also seeking American Swimming Coaches Association certification?" Be sure to check "Yes".

**I'm not a new coach but I'd like to take the test anyway – am I allowed to do that?**

Yes, any USA Swimming coach member may take the test.

**Does USA Swimming require lifeguards during practice?**

USA Swimming does not require lifeguards to be on duty for swim practices or meets. USA Swimming rules require all coach members to be certified in three different areas in order to be on deck coaching: Safety Training for Swim Coaches, CPR and First Aid. If the facility has a requirement for lifeguards to be on duty in order for its insurance to be in effect, then this is a facility regulation. Many states also have laws that require lifeguards to be on deck in certain situations.

**I need to renew my Safety Training for Swim Coaches (STSC) certification. My local ARC chapter has informed me that a course called Sport Safety Training has replaced STSC. If I take Sport Safety Training instead of STSC, have I met the requirements?**

No! Sport Safety Training does fulfill the First Aid and CPR requirements, but it has not replaced Safety Training for Swim Coaches.

### **I need to renew my Safety Training for Swim Coaches certification.**

#### **How do I find a class?**

Safety Training for Swim Coaches (STSC) is only offered by the American Red Cross. Contact your local Red Cross chapter. If your area is not offering the course right now, there are several options available:

- For a list of ARC instructors, or to find out if Safety Training for Swim Coaches is offered in your area, go to the following website: [www.pparc.org/usa-swim](http://www.pparc.org/usa-swim). You will need to enter the user name *swimcoach* and the password *4usswim*
- Contact a large USA Swimming team in your area; chances are good that one of the coaches is a certified STSC instructor.
- If your coaching background includes swimming, you can probably pass the STSC test without taking the course. The ARC calls this a "Challenge". If your ARC Chapter isn't offering the course right now, ask them if you can come in and "Challenge" the course (involves the written test and skills demonstration only). Because the skills demonstration requires removing an injured athlete from the pool, bring a friend to "play" this role during the demonstration portion of the test.
- Contact your Local Swimming Committee (LSC) Membership and/or Safety Chair to see if he/she has a list of STSC instructors that you can contact directly about teaching you the course. You can find contact information on the USA Swimming website under the "Volunteers" tab. Click on "LSCs".

### **My CPR certification has expired and I just have not had time to get it renewed yet. Do I still have USA Swimming insurance while I am on deck coaching?**

From an insurance standpoint, you are no longer insured as a coach as of the date that any of your certifications expire. You are immediately considered a non-athlete member who is no longer a coach. One of the greatest exposures a coach has from a liability standpoint is "improper instruction." For example, a swimmer dives too deep and is severely injured. The coach and club are sued. If the coach does not have current certifications, he/she no longer has coverage for this type of claim. Further, the club's insurance could be in jeopardy if it knew the coach's certification(s) had lapsed.

#### **How can I find the contact information for the Local Swimming Committee's (LSC)?**

You can find the information on the USA Swimming website. Click on the "Volunteers" tab located on the top of each page. From there, click on "LSC" where you can choose the appropriate LSC contact person or website.

#### **Does only the coach of record need to be 18 years of age or older?**

USA Swimming rules state that the coach of record for the team must be at least 18 years of age. There are no age requirements for the other coaches on the team. However, the LSC can impose rules above and beyond USA Swimming's. Please check with your LSC General Chair to find out the rules for your LSC.

#### **How do I register? Where do I send my USA Swimming Coach registration form?**

You will need to register through your LSC Membership Chair. On the USA Swimming website, go to the "Volunteers" tab and then click on LSCs.

### **How do I find out which LSC I am in?**

Look at the LSC Map. It's on the USA Swimming website, "Volunteers" tab. Click on "LSC's." If you can not find your location or are unsure about it you can contact the Member Services Department by calling 719-866-4578. The department will be able to let you know which LSC you are in and who the contact people are for that LSC.

#### **How do I know if I am a USA Swimming Coach member?**

After your local registration person has processed your application you will receive a registration card (usually in the mail) that has the year that you are a coach member in the background with your name and address in the foreground. At the bottom of the card are the words "is a coach member of USA Swimming. Membership expires 12-31-200\_." If it does not say "coach member" at the bottom of the card and says "non-athlete member" then you need to contact your registration person immediately because you are not registered as a coach member!

#### **What is the USA Swimming recommended coach-to-swimmer ratio?**

USA Swimming does not have a coach-to-athlete ratio. It is up to the club's coaching staff to determine the safest ratio. This should be based on several criteria:

- Skill level and age of the athletes in the water.
- Skill level of the coach (years experience, professional background, etc.).
- Type of facility (size of pool, number of lanes).

#### **I still have questions. Who can I call?**

Call the Club Development Division at USA Swimming: 719-866-4578.