

CERTIFICATION MATRIX

National Certification	Certification and Advancement			Maintenance of Certification		Comments
	Time and Activity	Training ⁷	Evaluation/ Recommendation	Training ⁷	Activity and Evaluation <small>(in 24 months prior to re-certification)</small>	
National 1 N1 LSC Official	LSC certifications must comply with "Minimum Requirements"					Eligible to work LSC Meets
National 2 N2 Experienced Official	Min one year at N1 and at least 12 sessions at 6 LSC level meets in the position .	Help train others ¹	LSC Chair ² and National Evaluator ³	Continued training ⁴ and help train others ¹	Maintain LSC certification; at least 12 sessions at 6 LSC level meets. Two Officials Qualifying Meets ⁵ .	Suggested min qualification to work regional, zone, sectional and grand prix meets.
National 3 N3 National Championship Eligible Official	Min. one year at N2 , min 12 sessions at 6 LSC level meets and at least 4 sessions in the position at each of two Officials Qualifying Meets ⁵	Help train others ¹ . Attend clinic ⁴ .	LSC Chair ² . Positive reports from National Evaluators ³ at Officials Qualifying Meets ⁵ and, for Starter or Deck Referee, Pass Final Evaluations ⁶ .	Attend or teach Clinics ⁴ and train or mentor N1 and N2 officials ¹	Maintain LSC certification; at least 12 sessions at 4 LSC level meets. Two Officials Qualifying ⁵ or National Championship meets.	N3 S&T and National Championship Meet experience is also required prior to certification as N3 Chief Judge, Starter, Deck Referee or Administrative Referee.

Footnotes:

1. Assist in training of others by deck mentoring trainee officials.
2. Confirmation by LSC Officials Chair that the official has met all LSC certification requirements, has officiated at the required number of LSC level meets and that the candidate has the qualities and skills necessary for advancement to the National Certification Level. If necessary, other sources may be used to verify an applicant's qualities and skills and LSC certification and participation. **## Interim procedure - applicant certifies that they have met all participation requirements.**
3. An evaluation report by a National Officials Committee approved Evaluator (**National Evaluator**) indicating that the candidate has demonstrated the required qualities and skills over several sessions and recommending the official for advancement. One Evaluation for advancement to each N2 Position and N3 Stroke and Turn Judge and for all re-certification. Two evaluations for advancement to N3 Chief Judge, Starter and Deck Referee – one Initial and one Final.
4. Continued training - attend or, if qualified, teach clinics to improve the quality and skills of officials. Clinics may include teaching introductory clinics to new or advancing LSC officials and attending or teaching, if qualified, clinics at officials "qualifying" or National Championship meets.
5. Officials **Qualifying Meets** may be Regional, Sectional, Zone, Grand Prix or other selected meets that meet the minimum requirements established by, and are approved by, the National Officials Committee (NOC). Evaluations of all officials seeking credit for **N2** or **N3** Certification or Re-certification shall be completed by NOC approved Evaluators and submitted to the National Officials Chair by the National Evaluators. The National Officials Chair may substitute other requirements deemed equivalent for applicants with significant geographical restrictions. Time Trials at National Championship Meets may be used for one advancement evaluation of N3 Starters.
To re-certify in **N3 Chief Judge, Starter, Deck Referee and Administrative Referee** positions at least 4 of the required sessions at officials "qualifying meets" shall be: -
 - **Administrative Referee and Deck Referee:** - at least 2 sessions as Deck Referee or Admin. Referee with any balance of the 4 sessions as Starter, CJ or Stroke & Turn Judge.
 - **Starter:** - at least 2 sessions as starter with any balance of the 4 sessions as Administrative Referee, Deck Referee, Chief Judge or Stroke & Turn Judge.
 - **Chief Judge:** - at least 3 sessions as Chief Judge or 2 sessions as Admin. Referee or Deck Referee with any balance of the 4 sessions as Starter or Stroke and Turn Judge.
 - **Stroke and Turn Judge:** - at least 4 sessions as Stroke and Turn Judge unless re-certifying in another position at the same or higher level. (eg N2 Deck Ref re-certification does not include N3 S&T. N3 Deck Ref re-certification does include N3 S&T.) If satisfactory re-certification evaluations are completed at the N2 level in another position, only 2 satisfactory N3 Stroke and Turn Judge re-certification evaluation sessions are required.
6. Advancement to the position of **N3 Starter** or **N3 Deck Referee** requires specific Final evaluation and testing as outlined in the "**National 3 Starter - Final Evaluation**" and the "**National 3 Deck Referee – Final Evaluation**".
7. All **N2** and **N3** candidates and applicants for re-certification shall have reviewed the most recent edition of the Officials Manual and recommended protocol and guidelines posted on the USA Swimming web site.



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Notes to the Certification Matrix:

- Only **N3** officials, **with current LSC certification and participation** may be selected to officiate in any capacity at a National Championship Meet. The National Officials Chair shall verify that applicants are active in LSC type meets in the preceding 24 months and have maintained the applicable skills and qualities before offering an invitation to work a National Championship Meet. The National Officials Chair may verify ability, competence and LSC participation from other sources if an LSC Chair is not responsive or objective or the official is known to work many LSC level meets outside their nominal LSC. **N3** certification is a requirement, not a guarantee, for selection to the National Championship Deck. Current **N3 certification** is recognition that the official has achieved a high level of skill and professionalism in the position **and** contributes to the advancement of the general quality of officiating at all levels in USA Swimming.
- **The National Officials Chair may:**
 - exempt certain **N3** officials selected as “**National Evaluators**” from part of the LSC level meet participation requirements if they provide National Evaluation services at a sufficient number of Qualifying Meets to make up the differential,
 - grant a hiatus to USA Swimming officials who assume executive roles in the administration or governance of USA Swimming or FINA, which do not allow time for participation in the required number of LSC level or Qualifying meets. At the end of the executive role hiatus, the official may resume their highest certification after officiating at a total of 6 sessions at 2, or more, LSC or higher level meets, if they have not already done so in the year before the end of the hiatus.
 - for a swimming official joining USA Swimming with verifiable certification from other swimming organizations, recommend to the Officials Committee: i) recognition of an equivalent level of training, experience and qualifications and, ii) modified requirements for National Certification.
- The National Officials Chair may assign “**National Evaluators**” to certain **Qualifying Meets** where the number of **N3** candidates approved for **Final Deck Referee** and **Final Starter Evaluation** warrants. Generally, **Qualifying Meet** hosts must arrange for qualified **National Evaluators** to be present at their meet.
- It is not necessary to progress through all positions at the **N2** or **N3** level, **however, certification as a N3 Stroke and Turn Judge and working a National Championship Meet as a S&T Judge is required before certification in any other position at the N3 level.** One meet qualifies all positions.
- **N3 Deck Referees** may be certified as **N3 Administrative Referee** after satisfactory completion of an assignment as the Administrative Referee at a **Qualifying Meet** or as Assistant Administrative Referee at a National Championship Meet and a positive evaluation by a qualified **National Evaluator**. **N2 or N3 Deck Referees** may be certified **N2 Administrative Referee** after satisfactory completion of an assignment as Assistant or Administrative Referee at a **Qualifying Meet** and a positive evaluation by a National Evaluator and the Meet Referee (can be the same person) and a recommendation from the LSC Officials Chair. It is not necessary for an **N3 Deck Referee** to be certified as an **N2 Administrative Referee** before advancing to **N3 Administrative Referee**.
- Initial certifications in **N2** and **N3** positions will usually expire on either June 30 or December 31 of the year that gives at least two full years and less than 2.5 years of certification. All required activity must take place within the 24 months preceding completion of the application for certification or re-certification. Re-certification applications may be submitted up to 6 months prior to expiration. Re-certifications will generally expire 2 years after the expiration date on the expiring certification. If new **N2** or **N3** certification applications do not include the required evaluations to re-certify in **N2** positions that are not being advanced, or in existing **N3** positions, the new expiry date may only be advanced to the next expiry day plus one year. **N1** certification and re-certification and durations remain with the LSC.
- **N2** and **N3** Officials whose certification expires may complete the requirements and submit an application for re-certification within 3 months of the lapse (up until March 31 or September 30 as applicable), however the new expiry date will remain 2 years from the expiring date. Failure to decertify within this window will result in the official's National certification, and eligibility to be selected for meets, dropping one National level, e.g. **N3 Deck Referee** will drop to **N2 Deck Referee**, **N3 Starter** to **N2 Starter**, etc. Reinstatement will require full compliance with the advancement requirements.

