



U.S. Masters Swimming – Return to Competition

Phase 1 (Starting November 1, 2020)

We at USMS know you're looking for guidance to be able to conduct safe and fun sanctioned in-person events for our members. Starting November 1, 2020, we'll implement a phased approach to return to competition. We understand not all LMSCs will be able to begin holding events because of state, local, and facility restrictions; however, we want those that do conduct events to plan with USMS guidelines and recommendations in place.

Phase 1 guidance is focused on in-person pool meets, which are the most likely event format to be held as USMS returns to competition in November 2020. Guidance is also being developed for open water events. Please contact openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org if you are considering sanctioning an open water event in late 2020 or early 2021.

Phase 1: Small, local events (50 swimmers or fewer per session)

Although no set of guidelines is exhaustive, we recommend the sanctioning of small events under the following guidelines:

1. Federal, state, and local health guidelines and orders, as well as facility requirements, supersede all advice in this document when they are more restrictive than USMS guidance. If social distancing and/or gathering requirements prohibit any of the parameters listed here, LMSC sanctions chairs should NOT sanction the event.
2. LMSCs are empowered to make decisions about whether they're able to sanction events within the scope of this phase. LMSC sanctions chairs should review meet information, safety plans, and additional documentation carefully to ensure that they adhere to federal, state, and local guidelines, as well as the guidelines in this document.
3. In-person competitions should be limited to no more than 50 athletes per session. Multi-session meets are permissible as long as the per-athlete limits for each session are enforced within the venue.
4. Entrants should travel from no farther than a 100-mile radius from the event venue. In areas where population density is greater (or the boundaries of the LMSC don't exceed a 100-mile radius), travel should be limited to within the LMSC.
5. Event directors shall submit a COVID-19 safety plan to the LMSC sanctions chair for review. Sanctions will not be granted without a safety plan in place. It is requested that LMSC sanctions chairs forward safety plans to events@usmastersswimming.org so the National Office can gather comprehensive best practices and assist as needed.
6. Require attendees to complete the USMS COVID-19 Participant Screening Form prior to entering the facility. Do not allow anyone exhibiting COVID-19-like symptoms to compete or enter the facility.
7. Event directors should institute a temperature check of each attendee before entry into the facility, provide hand sanitizer for attendees, and require face masks for all attendees (swimmers, volunteers, officials, and facility staff) except while in the water.

8. Social distancing on the deck will be imperative to allow for appropriate spacing in the venue between athletes, and to minimize the number of individuals at the starting end of the pool (swimmers, timers, and officials).
9. Event directors are responsible for clearly communicating safety plans in published event information and providing email updates to attendees as needed.
10. The most recent [USMS liability release form](#) must be executed by each participant during the event registration process. To be clear, USMS liability insurance doesn't cover transmission of viral or bacterial infections.

Most of all, use common sense to make events as safe as possible for all attendees. We'll be cheering for you, from a distance!