

ARTICLE 32 SWIMMING

The T.A.A.F. Swimming Program Goal is to provide a state championship meet for recreational swimmers who have trained exclusively with a summer swim team. It is our desire to give participants a chance to compete in a sport and to be successful against swimmers of their own ability and have the same opportunities to train in order to enhance their self-esteem.

The state commissioner may implement procedures to adjust the eligibility requirements, entries, late fees, protest fee, events, awards, division, and meet operation procedure if the state commissioner deems necessary to assure a more effective meet for both spectators and participants. The information will be available to the member city/coaches in the state meet packet.

32.1 Male and female must compete in their age category: 6 & under; 8 & under; 9-10, 11-12, 13-14, 15-17, 18-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-70, etc in 5-year increments.

32.2 Swimmer's age classification for all divisions will be:
.01 Winter – age as of the Winter Games of Texas
.02 Summer – June 1 of the current year
Birth certificates must be from the Bureau of Vital Statistics.

32.3 Swimming is to be considered an individual sport.

32.4 RESIDENCE OF PARTICIPANTS: See Article 4.8 Individual Sports Participants.

32.5 The T.A.A.F. rulebook will be the governing rulebook. Rules not specifically covered in this rulebook will be covered by the **OFFICIAL HIGH SCHOOL SWIMMING, DIVING & WATER POLO RULES** published by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

32.6 T.A.A.F. Swimming will follow FINA guidelines regarding swim suits for participants.

32.7 T.A.A.F. swimming is open for anyone who meets the following criteria:

- .01 From January 1 of the current year to April 30, in the current year, individuals must follow eligibility guidelines as set forth below. Deviations from guidelines will result in disqualification of individual from T.A.A.F. swimming. Repeated violations from individuals on the same team may result in team/coach disqualification from T.A.A.F. swimming.
- a) Individuals may participate in clinics not to exceed 90 minutes per week
 - b) Clinics must be open to the general public and participation cannot be exclusive to team members
 - c) Registration/Notification – it is required that the State Commissioner be notified of clinics as to eliminate any questions or concerns that arise during the season.
 - d) Failure to register/notify the State Commissioner of clinics may result in team disqualification from T.A.A.F. Swimming
 - e) Participation in T.A.A.F. Winter Games of Texas (see 32.22)
 - f) Summer season work-outs can begin May 1 each year
 - g) Individuals may not be registered with, practice with, or compete with any year-round program

Exceptions:

- May 1- Dec 31
- Any school related activity
- Any family lap swimming program
- Any swimmer in divisions 15 & older
- Programs approved, in writing, by both Swim Commissioners and the T.A.A.F. State Office

32.8 Age group swimming is defined as any swimming event where the participants are grouped together through the use of an upper and lower age limit. See Rule 32.2 for divisions

- .01 A boy or girl must participate in his/her age division. No participant may change or swim in another age classification.

32.9 REGIONAL MEET: Each region must host a regional swim meet to qualify their participants for the state meet.

- .01 Regional meets must be conducted and operated according to T.A.A.F. rules.
- .02 TAAF Swimming will use the NFSHS protocol for starting races.
 - a) The starter/referee signals the swimmers with a series of short whistles (no fewer than 4) to approach the blocks and prepare to swim, followed by the announcer or starter/referee announcing the event/distance/heat.
 - b) When all the swimmers have approached the blocks, the starter/referee blows a long whistle for the heat to step on the blocks for forward starts or in the water for backstroke starts, and take their preparatory position.
 - c) Once all swimmers are on the blocks or in the water, the referee turns the heat over to the starter.
 - d) When the swimmers are prepared, the starter says 'take your mark.'
 - e) When swimmers have assumed the correct starting position and are motionless, the starter activates the starting signal.
 - f) If a swimmer does not respond promptly to the command 'take your mark,' the starter shall immediately release all swimmers with the command 'stand up' upon which the swimmers may stand up or relax.
- .03 The date for the regional meet will be held no later than two weeks prior to the state meet.
- .04 Each participant must participate in a regional meet and be certified by the regional director to be eligible for advancement to the state finals.
 - a) The 15-17, 18-24, 25 and over age groups must register and pay for their state entries at the Regional meet. The Regional Meet Director has the option of requiring these individuals to swim at the Regional Meet.
- .05 Each participant must possess and show a birth certificate to the regional director to be certified.
- .06 ENTRIES WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTED FROM THE REGIONAL MEET DIRECTOR FROM EACH REGION.
- .07 Participants in the 10 & under age divisions may compete in no more than three (3) events.**
 - a) A swimmer may be entered in any three (3) events and be listed as an alternate on any relay(s). The alternate(s) must be listed in the regional meet entries prior to the region meet in order to qualify. If necessary, he may scratch from one event to swim a relay only if one of the teammates listed on the relay is scratched from the meet.**
 - b) These changes must be made before the meet starts or be approved by the Region Meet Director once the meet starts.**

.08 Participants in the 11-14 age divisions may compete in no more than four (4) events.

a) A swimmer may be entered in any four (4) events and be listed as an alternate on any relay(s). The alternate(s) must be listed in the regional meet entries prior to the region meet in order to qualify. If necessary, he may scratch from one event to swim a relay only if one of the teammates listed on the relay is scratched from the meet.

b) These changes must be made before the meet starts or be approved by the Region Meet Director once the meet starts.

.09 Swimmers 15-17 would be limited to four (4) events at the state meet, plus 3 mixed relay entries (total of 7). Swimmers 18 & over, unlimited entries would be allowed at the state meet (optional at region meet).

.10 If a region does not allow for electronic registrations via Hy-tek, regional meet registration/entry will be done by on-line registration

32.10 STATE MEET ENTRIES: Each region may enter a minimum of **three (3)** persons in each event and **three (3)** relay teams in each relay event in the 6 and under, 8 and under, 9-10, 11-12 and 13-14 divisions. At the regional meet only, if a discrepancy occurs to determine which participant(s) shall advance to the state meet, the meet director must first consider the rule(s) and the timing system used, then follow the procedures to select the correct time(s) and placement of the swimmers. If that is not successful, then a swim-off for those swimmers only must be done to determine which swimmers advance to state. TIES MUST HAVE A SWIM-OFF. ONLY ALLOTTED NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS PER EVENT WILL ADVANCE TO STATE. Swimmers 15-17 will be limited to 4 entries, plus 3 mixed relays (total of 7) at the state meet. For swimmers 18 & over, unlimited entries will be allowed to advance to the state meet.

.01 Additional Entries:

a) Additional entries from each region may be awarded by the state commissioner based on the total number of individuals registered per region as of the region meet entry deadline (set by the region) of the current year.

b) Each region must register a minimum of 1,000 individual participants prior to getting additional entries to the state meet. For every 500 individuals registered thereafter, the region will receive an additional entry to the state championship.

.02 Relay events: In relay events, relay personnel will be the four (4) swimmers who qualified the relay at the regional meet, plus the two (2) alternates who were entered at the regional meet. (The two alternates may be any swimmer of the same age group).

.03 Regional Directors or his/her appointed representative responsibilities after the region meet:

a) Certify all advancing participants by forwarding entries in the approved manner. Entry procedure will be outlined in the coaches packet (March) and on the website (June) each year.

32.11 ENTRY FEE: An entry fee of up to seven dollars (\$7.00) can be charged per person per event, as well as having an admission charge at the gate to defray the expenses of hosting the state meet.

32.12 All state entry fees must be sent to the T.A.A.F. State Office along with all required information by the Region Director/designee by the deadline date outlined in the coaches packet. Failure to comply may result in disqualification of swimmers.

32.13 AWARDS: Gold, silver and bronze medals will be awarded to the first, second, and third place winners in each event. **Ribbons or medals will be awarded to the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth place finishers in each event.** No high point award will be given.

- 32.14 The T.A.A.F. swim meet shall be conducted as a time final championship.
- 32.15 The time schedule of the events will be determined by the sponsoring city with approval by the state commissioner.
- 32.16 Order of events will be determined by the state commissioner and the host city
- 32.17 Verification of entries: Once entries have been forwarded to state, all region directors/representatives and/or coaches are responsible for verifying entries on-line prior to the state meet. At the state meet a scratch meeting will be held before the meet begins. Only scratches will be accepted at this meeting. Under no circumstances will any changes be made on the days of the meet. It will be the regional director's responsibility to see that all coaches and individuals understand that no changes will be made after the scratch meeting is over. Relay swimmers must be declared at this meeting.

32.18 Any year round eligibility protests must be resolved by 12:00pm (noon) on Tuesday prior to the start of the state meet.

32.19 REQUIRED FORM: The official INDIVIDUAL SPORTS PARTICIPANT FORM will be provided by T.A.A.F. and when executed will "follow" participants and coaches to all levels of T.A.A.F. competition during the current season.

- .01 Each T.A.A.F. participant will sign a form at the lowest level of T.A.A.F. competition affirming that he/she meets the requirements of the T.A.A.F. eligibility and residency rules and that he/she has read, understood and agreed to the release and waiver of liability.
- .02 Should the participants be under 18 years of age, a parent or guardian must also sign the form affirming that their minor participant meets the requirements of the T.A.A.F. eligibility and residency rules and that as a parent or guardian, he/she has read, understood and agreed to the release and waiver of liability.
- .03 Coaches will sign the form affirming that to the best of their knowledge all of the swimmers in their swimming program meet the TAAF eligibility and residency rules and that the coach will abide by all rules set forth by TAAF. If any eligibility issue arises the coach and swimmer are subject to any disciplinary action to be taken up to and including suspension.

32.20 STATE EVENTS PER PARTICIPANT

.01 Participants in the 10 & under age divisions may compete in no more than three (3) events.

- a) **A swimmer may be entered in any three (3) events and be listed as an alternate on any relay(s). The alternate(s) must be listed in the regional meet entries prior to the region meet in order to qualify. If necessary, he may scratch from one event to swim a relay only if one of the teammates listed on the relay is scratched from the meet.**
- b) **These changes must be made before the meet starts or be approved by the State Commissioner once the meet starts.**

.02 Participants in the 11-14 age divisions may compete in no more than four (4) events.

- a) **A swimmer may be entered in any four (4) events and be listed as an alternate on any relay(s). The alternate(s) must be listed in the regional meet entries prior to the region meet in order to qualify. If necessary, he may scratch from one event to swim a relay only if one of the teammates listed on the relay is scratched from the meet.**
- b) **These changes must be made before the meet starts or be approved by the State Commissioner once the meet starts**

.03 Swimmers 15-17 would be limited to four (4) events at the state meet, plus 3 mixed relay entries (total of 7). Swimmers 18 & over, unlimited entries would be allowed at the state meet.

32.21 TAAF Swimming will use the following protocol regarding false starts:

- .01 For ages 10 & under: one false start will be allowed for swimmers age 10 & under. For the initial start, the heat will be recalled if any swimmer is observed before the starting signal. This initial false start will be charged to the field. The starter shall restart the race upon signal by the referee. If the referee independently observes and confirms the starter's observation that a subsequent violation has occurred, the race shall continue without recall. The swimmer or swimmers who committed the subsequent violation shall be disqualified upon completion of the race.
- .02 For ages 11 & older: any swimmer starting before the starting signal is given shall be disqualified if the Referee independently observes and confirms the starter's observation that a violation occurred. Swimmers remaining on the blocks shall be relieved from their starting position with a 'stand up.' The race will be restarted upon signal by the referee. If the starting signal has been given before the disqualification is declared, the race shall continue without recall. If the referee independently observes and confirms the starter's observation that a violation occurred, the swimmer or swimmers who are in violation shall be disqualified upon completion of the race.
- .03 If the recall signal is activated inadvertently, no swimmer shall be charged with a false start and the starter shall restart the race upon signal by the referee. A swimmer who would otherwise be charged with a false start may be relieved of the charge if the false start was caused by the swimmer's reaction to the 'stand up' command. A swimmer shall not be disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start if the race is permitted to proceed. Enforcement of the correct starting position is the responsibility of the starter.

32.22 Officials Finish Times: The meet director shall approve all finish times and have the authority to adjust the finish times due to problems associated with the electronic timing system/ touching the electronic touch pads and /or manual times.

32.23 Winter Games of Texas

- .01 This event will be open to all interested swimmers (USA, YMCA, TAAF).
- .02 TAAF registered swimmers can compete with the following eligibility policy:
If a T.A.A.F. swimmer wishes to compete in the T.A.A.F. Winter Games of Texas and plans to swim in the T.A.A.F. Summer Games of Texas, they will be allowed to practice after December 31st of the current year, up until T.A.A.F. Winter Games of Texas swim meet provided they register and compete in the T.A.A.F. Winter Games of Texas. T.A.A.F. Swimmers that practice after December 31st and fail to compete in the following T.A.A.F. Winter Games of Texas will be ineligible to compete in that year's T.A.A.F. Summer Games of Texas.

32.24 EVENTS (SAME FOR GIRLS AND BOYS):

.01 6 & UNDER

25	FREESTYLE
25	BACKSTROKE
100	FREESTYLE RELAY

Swimmers ages 6 & under who wish to swim any other event will compete in the 8 & under age division.

.02 8 & UNDER AND 9 - 10 AGE GROUPS

100	MEDLEY RELAY	25	BACKSTROKE
100	FREESTYLE RELAY	25	BREASTSTROKE
25	FREESTYLE	25	BUTTERFLY
50	FREESTYLE	100	INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

.03 11 - 12 AGE GROUPS

200	MEDLEY RELAY	50	BACKSTROKE
200	FREESTYLE RELAY	50	BREASTSTROKE
50	FREESTYLE	50	BUTTERFLY
100	FREESTYLE	100	INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

.04 13 - 14 AND 15 - 17 AGE GROUPS

200	MEDLEY RELAY	50	BACKSTROKE
200	FREESTYLE RELAY	50	BREASTSTROKE
50	FREESTYLE	50	BUTTERFLY
100	FREESTYLE	100	INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY
200	FREESTYLE	200 Mixed Freestyle Relay (15-17 only)	
100 Mixed Freestyle Relay (15-17 only)		200 Mixed Medley Relay (15-17 only)	

Mixed Relays are of mixed gender, of which at least two must be female.

.05 18 - 24 25 - 29; 30-34; 35-39; 40-44; 45-49; 50-54; 55-59; 60-64; 65-70, etc in 5 year increments

NOTE: All relays will be for 18 +

200	MEDLEY RELAY	50	BACKSTROKE
200	FREESTYLE RELAY	50	BREASTSTROKE
50	FREESTYLE	50	BUTTERFLY
100	FREESTYLE	100	INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY
200	FREESTYLE	200 MIXED FREESTYLE RELAY	
100	MIXED FREESTYLE RELAY	200 MIXED MEDLEY RELAY	

Mixed Relays are of mixed gender, of which at least two must be female.

32.25 The state commissioner shall have the authority to select a core group of T.A.A.F. personnel to assist in the running of the state meet. Those individuals selected would have their travel expenses reimbursed by the T.A.A.F. state office.