SWIMMING COMPETITION RULES

Divisioning

Athletes are grouped by:

Ability (primary factor), Age, and Gender

All athletes receive an award. Disqualified athletes receive a participation award.

General Aquatics Rules

- Athletes must train at least **8 weeks/hours** before competition.
- Swimmers must complete races **without physical assistance**.
- Swimming a competition time more than **25% faster** than the submitted/divisioning time results in disqualification under the **Maximum Effort Rule**.
- Proper swim attire is required; goggles and caps are encouraged.
- Flotation devices are only allowed in designated flotation events.

Safety Requirements

- Minimum of **1 certified lifeguard per 25 swimmers**.
- Coaches should have an emergency action plan.
- Pool depths must be clearly marked.
- Safety lines must separate shallow and deep water during recreational activities.
- Pool facilities must pass inspection before use.

Special Considerations

- Athletes with Down syndrome diagnosed with **Atlanto-Axial Instability (AAI)** may **not** participate in: Butterfly, Individual Medley, Diving starts, or Diving

Starts

- All events use **in-water starts**.
- One hand must hold the wall or block for most starts.
- Backstroke starts require **both hands** on the wall.

Race Violations

Athletes may be disqualified for:

- Failing to touch the wall during turns.
- Pulling on lane ropes.
- Interfering with another swimmer.
- Using equipment that improves speed, buoyancy, or endurance (fins, paddles, webbed gloves, power bands, etc.).

Goggles are permitted.

Official Events

Flotation

- 25m Front Flotation, 25m Back Flotation, 4×25m Unassisted Flotation Relay

Individual Events

- 25m, 50m, 100m, and selected 200m races in:
  - Freestyle, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Butterfly &Individual Medley

Relays

- 4×25m Freestyle, 4×25m Medley, 4×50m Freestyle, & 4×50m Medley

Stroke Highlights

Freestyle

- Any swimming style may be used.
- Must touch the wall at turns and finish.
- Standing is allowed, but walking is not.

Backstroke

- Start in the water facing the wall.
- Finish while on the back.

Breaststroke

- Arm and leg movements must be simultaneous.
- Touches at turns and finish require **both hands simultaneously**.

Butterfly

- Arms move together over and under the water.
- Leg movements must be simultaneous.
- Two-hand touch required at turns and finish.

Individual Medley

Order:

1. Butterfly
2. Backstroke
3. Breaststroke
4. Freestyle

Relay Rules

- Four swimmers per team.
- Each swimmer swims one leg only.
- Mixed-gender relay teams compete as **male relays**.
- Medley relay order:
    1. Backstroke
    2. Breaststroke
    3. Butterfly
    4. Freestyle
- Early takeoffs result in team disqualification.