

DELEGATE PACKET FOR 2026 USMS ANNUAL MEETING (LEGISLATION COMMITTEE)

TABLE OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE USMS GLOSSARY, PART 2, and PARTS 4–6 of the USMS CODE OF REGULATIONS

The following proposed amendments to the USMS Code of Regulations are submitted to the House of Delegates for consideration at the annual meeting in accordance with articles 601.2, 601.4.1, 601.4.5, and 601.4.7.

The committee action is indicated as “recommended,” “recommended as amended,” or “not recommended.” Committee actions may be reconsidered at the annual meeting before presentation to the House of Delegates.

Amendments that are recommended by the committee require a majority vote of the House of Delegates to adopt.

Amendments that are not recommended by the committee require a two-thirds vote of the House of Delegates to adopt.

Amendments that are presented as an “indivisible package” will be considered as a whole with a motion to adopt all of the changes in the entire package.

Number	Section	Description	Committee Action
L-1	201.1	Membership of Individuals	Recommended as amended
L-2	503.1	Zone Names and Boundaries	Recommended
L-3	507.1.10	R&T Committee Modification	Recommended as amended
L-4	601.4	Adoption of Proposed Amendments	Recommended as amended
L-5	505.1	Officer Positions	Recommended
L-6	601.2	Submission of Proposed Amendments	Recommended as amended

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L-1 201.1 Membership of Individuals Board of Directors Modify

Committee Action:		Recommended for Adoption	Recommended for Rejection
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

201.1 Membership of Individuals

A Standard membership in USMS establishes an individual's affiliation with the organization and subjects the individual to all applicable rules, policies, and codes of conduct.

B. Standard members are adults currently registered with USMS.

C Membership categories, associated benefits, privileges, and eligibility for specific programs, events, and recognition shall be defined in USMS policy. ~~Individual members are adults currently registered with USMS and assigned a standard membership.. Additional benefits may be offered and marketed as membership types or Membership categories and will be established in accordance with USMS policy.~~

201.1.1 Eligibility—Swimmers age 18 and over are eligible and may apply for membership in USMS.

~~201.1.2 Annual Membership~~

~~A. Standard membership is for the period January 1 through December 31 of each year. Standard membership is effective from the date of registration through December 31 of the membership year same year, except that registrations on or after November 1 shall provide membership from the registration date through December 31 of the following year. Swimmers may register unattached or may affiliate with a club that is currently registered as a USMS club or already registered for the same year for which the swimmer is registering.~~

~~B. College Club Swimming membership is for the period from the registration date through December 31 following the conclusion of the CCS membership year.~~

~~201.1.3 One-Event Registration~~

~~A Open water one-event registration—An LMSC may offer a single-event registration that allows an athlete to participate in a USMS-sanctioned open water event. Membership cards shall not be issued for one-event registration. One-event registrants must be considered unattached and agree to be governed by applicable USMS open water swimming rules and administrative regulations, except that their swims shall not~~

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~~be eligible for USMS open water awards and recognition. One event registrants shall be identified as such in the event results.~~

~~B Pool one event registration—An LMSC may offer a single event registration that allows an athlete to participate in one event sanctioned by that LMSC. Membership cards shall not be issued for one event registration. One event registrants must be considered unattached and agree to be governed by the rules and regulations of USMS, except that their times shall not be considered for Top 10 tabulation and USMS or world records, All American status, or any other USMS special awards; one event registration forms must include the statement “Times swum under one event registration are not eligible for USMS Top 10 or records consideration.” One event registrants shall be identified as such in the meet results.~~

201.1.2 Membership Application

A Individuals may apply for membership through the USMS website or by submitting an application form to ~~the LMSC membership coordinator or~~ the USMS National Office. ~~The LMSC shall provide a link to an electronic membership card or, upon request of the member, issue a membership card.~~

B All membership applications shall contain the language of the liability release as stated in USMS policy (see *USMS Guide to Local Operations*, Sanctions section).

201.1.3 Fees – The fees for standard membership, and any portion allocated ~~to USMS national operations and a portion allocated~~ to the LMSC in which an individual registers, ~~unless that individual is registering as a member of College Club Swimming, in which case the entire fee is allocated to USMS national operations. The allocation between national operations and LMSCs~~ shall be established by the House of Delegates.

Rationale

USMS membership has historically been structured as a single, uniform product that includes access to all programs, competitions, and recognition. As the organization evolves, this structure limits our ability to meet the needs of a broader and more diverse membership base and adjust to the evolving regulatory landscape.

This proposal modernizes the rule book by clearly distinguishing between:

- **Membership as an affiliation with USMS, and**
- **Access to specific programs, events, and recognition,** which may vary by membership category.

The proposed changes:

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- Establish membership in the rule book as a **core relationship and status**, rather than a fixed bundle of benefits
- Delegate authority to the Board of Directors to define **membership categories, benefits, and eligibility** through policy
- Maintain House of Delegates authority over standard **membership fees**, while allowing flexibility in pricing structures
- Enable USMS to adjust and introduce new membership models (e.g., trial memberships, competition licenses, partnerships, and premium offerings) without requiring repeated legislative changes

This flexibility is essential to:

- Support strategic growth initiatives
- Lower barriers to entry for new swimmers
- Align pricing and benefits with member needs
- Respond more quickly to partnership and market opportunities

Importantly, this proposal does **not** remove governance oversight. The House of Delegates retains authority over standard membership fees, and all members remain subject to USMS rules, policies, and codes of conduct.

By separating membership status from program eligibility, USMS can better serve current members while positioning the organization for future growth and innovation.

These changes are administrative in nature and do not reduce current member benefits but provide flexibility for future offerings.

L-2 503.1 Zone Names and Boundaries South Central Zone Modify

Committee Action: Recommended for Adoption		Recommended for Rejection	
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

Modification to rule **503.1 Zone Names and Boundaries**

Page 99 of the USMS Rule Book

Parties involved: South Central Zone Chair (Jacky Meiranos) & Southern LMSC Chair (Aaron Schnider). Conversations were had with the South East Zone Chair (Britta O’Leary) -- she expressed her support.

Amendment to the Rule:

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503.1 Zone Names and Boundaries The official names and constituent LMSCs for each of the zones shall be as follows:

Breadbasket—Colorado, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri Valley, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ozark, South Dakota.

Colonies—Adirondack, Connecticut, Delaware Valley, Maryland, Metropolitan, New England, New Jersey, Niagara, Potomac Valley, Virginia.

Great Lakes—Allegheny Mountain, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Lake Erie, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin.

Northwest—Alaska, Inland Northwest, Montana, Oregon, Pacific Northwest, Snake River, Utah.

Oceana—Hawaii, Pacific.

South Central—Arkansas, Gulf, Oklahoma, North Texas, **Southern**, South Texas.

Southeast—Florida, Florida Gold Coast, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina. ;
~~Southern~~—Southeastern, ~~Southern~~.

Southwest—Arizona, New Mexico, San Diego—Imperial, Southern Pacific.

Rationale for the proposed change:

Both the South Central Zone and the Southern LMSC agree that Southern's membership in the South Central Zone would benefit both parties. Southern's proximity to the region provides members with easier access to Zone events and championship meets, while the South Central Zone can help promote Southern LMSC meets through regional marketing initiatives to increase participation and support event success.

Other areas in the rule book that are affected by this change

Appendix B: LMSC and Zone Boundaries -- page 138.

Map to be redrawn so Southern is included in the South Central Zone.

L-3	507.1.10	R&T Committee Modification	R&T Committee	Modify
Committee Action:		Recommended for Adoption	Recommended for Rejection	
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated	

507.1.10 ~~Records and Tabulation~~ Meet Event Management Committee—The ~~Records and Tabulation~~ Meet Event Management Committee shall **advise and continuously improve** ~~establish and maintain~~ standardized procedures to **sanction**, verify and record results of pool meets **in partnership with the National Office**. This shall include ~~maintaining the list of certified pool~~

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~~measurements and~~ supporting the ~~volunteers that administer processes~~ and ~~coordination related to coordinating~~ sanctioning, pool measurement, and event results ~~processing databases~~. The committee shall ~~maintain~~ be consulted for the verification of USMS records, All-American and All-Star rosters, and USMS and World Aquatic Masters Top 10 times for each applicable course ~~, and shall publish all of the above at least annually~~. The committee shall consist of the committee chair and sufficient members to execute the committee function.

Rationale: The R&T Committee recommends updating its committee definition to reflect its changing oversight functions. Additionally, the committee feels it is best positioned to be a steward for standard procedures related to pool meet sanctioning - a process that has no committee oversight. The USMS National Office now owns/maintains the list of [certified pools](#) and its employees/contractor roles manage the validation/submission of National and World Aquatic Masters records (National Recorder) and the tabulation of SCM/SCY/LCM USMS Top Ten (Top Ten Coordinator). Publication of Top Ten, All-American and All-Star recognition programs is performed by the National Office.

Note: If approved, additional references inside and outside of the Rule Book will require updates

Other “Records and Tabulation” Rule Book references:

- Page i
- Page 38 - 104.5.8 Results
- Page 40 - 105.1.2 Deadlines
- Page 43 - 105.3.9, A.1.b, B, C
- Page 44 - 105.3.9 D, E
- Page 44 - 105.5 World Records
- Page 62 - 202.3 Recognized Swims
- Page 128 - Special Comments
- Page 139 - USMS Standing Committees

L-4 601.4 Adoption of Proposed Amendments

South Texas LMSC Modify

Committee Action: Recommended for Adoption		Recommended for Rejection	
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended	Defeated

601.4 Adoption of Proposed Amendments

601.4.1 Timely Amendments—Timely amendments shall be considered by the House of Delegates at the annual meeting and may be adopted as follows:

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A. All proposed amendments submitted to the committees of jurisdiction by an authorized body must be reported to the House of Delegates with a recommendation to adopt or reject the proposed amendments. Proposed amendments that are considered as an indivisible package must receive a recommendation to adopt from each committee of jurisdiction in order to be reported to the House of Delegates with a recommendation to adopt the indivisible package.

B. Proposed amendments **recommended for adoption shall be** presented to the House of Delegates by the committee(s) of jurisdiction ~~with a recommendation to adopt and~~ may be adopted by a majority of members of the House of Delegates who are present and voting.

C. Proposed amendments **recommended for rejection shall be reported** to the House of Delegates, **without action**, by the committee(s) of jurisdiction. ~~may be adopted by a two-thirds majority of members of the House of Delegates present and voting, notwithstanding the committee recommendation.~~

601.4.2 Emergency Amendments—Emergency amendments (amendments not considered timely) may be adopted by a nine-tenths vote of the House of Delegates members present and voting if they are properly submitted to, deemed an emergency by, and recommended by the committee with jurisdiction.

Rationale: The committees of jurisdiction that review proposals are composed of experts in their assigned areas. Members have deep knowledge of the rules of swimming, USMS administrative procedures, and good governance practices. These committees also understand how USMS rules interact with those of other organizations, including USA Swimming and World Aquatics. In addition, they understand the history behind many rules and the reasons those rules were implemented.

Over the past 10 years, no proposal recommended for rejection by the committee of jurisdiction has ultimately been approved by the House of Delegates (HOD). In most cases, these proposals were rejected because they conflicted with other rules, conflicted with the rules of other governing bodies, or were inconsistent with good governance practices.

However, under the current system, all proposals — including those recommended for rejection — are still presented to the HOD. In practice, the HOD often spends more time discussing proposals recommended for rejection than those recommended for approval. This results in wasted time, frustrated volunteers, and confusion among HOD members regarding the proposals under consideration.

USMS should rely on the expertise of the committees of jurisdiction to thoughtfully evaluate proposals and bring forward only those proposals the committees support for adoption.

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If adopted, this amendment makes a committee recommendation to adopt a prerequisite for House of Delegates consideration. Proposals on which a committee takes no action would no longer reach the House floor and there would be no mechanism for the House to consider them. Members who wish to advance such proposals in the future should work through the committee of jurisdiction.

L-5 505.1 Officer Positions Board of Directors (or Legislation) modify

Committee Action:	Recommended for Adoption	Recommended for Rejection
HOD Action:	Adopted	Adopted as Amended Defeated

505.1 Positions

The elected officers of USMS shall be ~~president~~ **board chair**, vice ~~chair~~ **president** of administration, vice ~~chair~~ **president** of community services, vice ~~chair~~ **president** of local operations, vice ~~chair~~ **president** of programs, secretary, and treasurer. No person may concurrently hold more than one such office.

Should this change pass there are several Housekeeping Updates that coincide:

- 403.1
- 403.5.2
- 503.2
- 503.3.3
- 504.1.3
- 504.1.6
- 505.3.1
- 505.3.2
- 506.4.2
- 506.6
- 506.7
- 506.7.5
- 506.8.2
- 506.8.4
- 507.1
- 507.2
- 507.3.1
- 507.3.2
- 507.3.3
- 601.1.2
- 601.1.3
- 601.5.3
- Appendix C

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Rationale:

Change the title of “president” to “board chair” to more accurately reflect the current roles and non-operational responsibilities of our board structure. This better describes our current board structure as an oversight board rather than an executive board and eliminates confusion between the CEO and President titles.

- The president of an organization serves as the primary operational and strategic leader, bridging the gap between executive directives and daily operations. Their core role focuses on implementing the CEO's vision, overseeing daily administration, managing department heads, and driving the company's operational and financial efficiency.
- A chairperson leads the board of directors and acts as the primary liaison between governance and executive management. Their core duties include running board meetings, liaising with the CEO or executive director, driving the strategic agenda, and representing the organization to external stakeholders.
- None of our 51 LMSCs use the title of President for the top board officer. All use Chair or Chairman.
- Of the 50 National Governing Bodies under the US Olympic & Paralympic Committee over 75% use Chair, Chairman or Board Chair.

Change the title of “vice president” to “vice chair” to more accurately reflect the current role and non-operational responsibilities of our board structure. Creating clarity around the responsibilities of the board and the staff will help our organization be more effective.

- A Vice President (VP) is a senior executive who serves as second or third in command, directly supporting the President or CEO. They translate high-level strategies into actionable operations, manage departmental budgets, and ensure cross-functional teams meet organizational goals.
- The Vice Chair of an organization acts as second-in-command to the Chair (of the Board). Primary duties include stepping in for the Chair when absent, assisting with governance and strategic planning, overseeing specific committees, and preparing to ascend to the Chair position.

L-6 601.2 Submission of Proposed Amendments Legislation Committee pg 112 Add

Committee Action:	Recommended for Adoption	Recommended for Rejection
HOD Action:	Adopted Adopted as Amended Defeated	

601.2.6 Exceptions to Consideration of Proposed Amendments – Upon advice of USMS legal counsel, the chair of a committee of jurisdiction ~~may~~ shall decline to consider a proposed amendment that, in counsel’s opinion, would create a credible and material risk to the organization or would conflict with applicable federal, state, or local law or regulation.

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Rationale: If a proposed amendment to the House of Delegates is determined to be detrimental to the best interest of the organization, including presentation and debate before the HOD, USMS needs a mechanism to decline to consider that proposals.