



Level 4 Application Instructions

Dear Applicant,

Congratulations on your decision to further your professional credentials by applying for Level 4 Coach Certification!

The requirements for certification as a Level 4 Coach are based on the areas of coaching that reflect the values of U.S. Masters Swimming. They are:

1. Contribution
2. Achievement
3. Growth & Retention
4. Leadership
5. Education
6. Extra Credit

For each category:

- there is a maximum number of points allowable toward total points.
- there is a minimum number of points you must achieve in that category.
- you must achieve points in at least two areas in each category.

For each line item within a category:

- the **Maximum** column shows the maximum number of points in that area that the Coach is allowed to apply toward that category's total

Mandatory Pre-requisites for Level 4 Certification:

1. Must be a USMS Level 3 Certified Coach
2. Must have at least 5 years of Masters coaching experience

Must hold current American Red Cross certification for either (a) or (b):

- a. **CPR-AED AND Safety Training for Swim Coaches (STSC)/First Aid**
 - i. STSC now includes **First Aid**, which is also a Level 4 pre-requisite.
 - ii. Please note that STSC is a 2-part course – an online academic portion and an in-water skills portion. You must complete both!
 - iii. Certificates from both the online and in-water skills must be submitted.
 - iv. Connect with an STSC instructor **before** signing up for any online portion as you may encounter a situation where you are charged twice for the course.
- b. **Lifeguarding** (now required by many aquatic facilities)
3. Must earn a minimum of 650 total points on the Level 4 application.
4. Regional (outside just your team and LMSC) and/or National contributions are required. This could be met by contributions in several categories. However, failure to meet this requirement, regardless of points achieved, will result in a deferred application.
5. Must be a Head Coach or Assistant Coach of your Masters team with significant responsibility in team operations (beyond coaching workouts). If an Assistant Coach, please have your Head Coach write a short letter that outlines the scope of services you provide as



an Assistant Coach with your Masters team. Coaches of workout groups will be considered. Applications will be awarded points based on the swimmers for which the applicant coach is the primary coach. Thus, if you coach 30 swimmers in your workout group, this is the group for which points can be awarded in the first 3 categories.

6. Letters from head coaches are helpful when multiple coaches apply for level 4 from the same club. Please do not take credit for participation of swimmers that rarely swim in your group, especially if they primarily swim with another applicant. Corroboration from team board and/or swimmers is helpful.
7. If you have any questions about any of the above requirements, please contact the coaches committee at coaches@usms.org.

The process to apply is outlined below and in the following pages. It is very important that you read through all instructions and return to those instructions when completing each section of your application, as these will guide you through what you need to submit as proof for the various categories and sub-categories.

Each application will be required to submit their completed package in a single PDF document (not a ZIP file). Included in that package should be the application scoring sheet where you fill in the score you believe that you have achieved. Proof of fulfillment in the various categories (outlined on the following pages) should then appear in the PDF document in the order of the application categories: Contributions, Achievement, Growth & Retention, Leadership, Education and Extra Credit. Submissions should be reflective of the professionalism expected of a level 4 Coach and should be able to stand up to public scrutiny. Supporting documentation should be relevant, clearly labeled as to which category and/or line-item it is supporting and be purged of extraneous information that does not contain supporting documentation. The application should seek to impress the committee in content, clarity, and professionalism.

The committee will use its discretion in determining how much credit is counted for each item based on documentation provided. Any place where the committee feels insufficient documentation is presented, scoring will be adjusted accordingly. The points system is simply a starting point for the committee's deliberation. Please note, simply earning the minimum in each category, does not match the minimum total points that must be earned on the application. Be sure to include all accomplishments so that your strengths will assist you in achieving the required overall points. If the committee determines that the applicant has scored sufficient points in each of the categories and in total, then the committee will use its combined wisdom, experience and knowledge to assess the applicant's body of work to determine whether it reflects that of an elite coach. This part is not about the mechanical scoring of points but, rather, persuasive demonstration/documentation of that which puts the applicant on a substantially different, more involved level than others who have attained Level 3. We are looking for Level 4 candidates to clearly exhibit professionalism and excellence in the field of coaching adult swimmers and who have offered significant contributions to Masters Swimming as a whole.

Applications are to be submitted via email to coaches@usms.org between January 15th and March 15th. Incomplete, unethical, early, or late applications will not be considered. Applicants failing to meet the pre-requisites will not be considered. Those not fulfilling these pre-requisites must wait until the next application submission dates and reapply.

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Completed applications will be reviewed by a panel of coaches and measured against the standards set forth in the following pages. Your submission should be professional in appearance and assembled into a single PDF document that can be compressed to submit it by email. There are several free computer programs and websites online that enable you to easily put together a single PDF from your documentation and compress it. Most local printing and copy stores can assist you as well.

Applicants will be notified of their status within a few weeks after the submission deadline closes.

If an application is deferred, the resubmitted application will be judged based on the new application date, and therefore the information submitted should be updated to ensure all dates fall within the timeframe allowed. This includes ensuring the required certifications are still current.

Thank you for all you do for our sport!

USMS Coaches Committee



Cover Form

Please complete all the information below

Name:				Date submitted:		
Address:						
City:				State:		Zip:
Phone:			Cell:			
Email:						
Years of Masters Coaching Experience:			Total Years Coaching:			
Team Name:			LMSC:			
USMS Certification Dates						
Level 1:		Level 2:		Level 3:		
American Red Cross training (list expiration dates and attach copies of certification).						
STSC (both certificates) or Lifeguarding		First Aid		CPR-AED		

By my signature, I do hereby attest that everything that I have presented here is true and factual

Signature

Date

Signature of Head Coach or Board member if applicant is not head coach



Instructions for Contributions Category

1. **Published Articles.** A minimum of two articles is required. When scanning articles for submission, it is okay to just scan the first page of a multi-page article as long as it shows the author, title, date, and the publication in which your article appeared and some of the body of your article.
 - a. Articles should be written by you, not about you.
 - b. Publications can be in any of the publications overseen by the National office, including, but not limited to any of the Streamlines and Swimmer Magazine, and the website. Zone newsletters and other publications may also be considered. Team emails and communications do not count.
 - c. This category also includes those who have served as designated online coaches providing workouts (for a calendar year) for USMS. If claiming this credit, please provide the year(s) and category of workouts you were responsible for creating.
2. **Host a Masters Clinic in the last 5 years.** Hosting of a Masters clinic event, or, one where you served as lead coach or assistant coach at another Masters team clinic or LMSC clinic. Include a clinic flyer or web announcement with dates and details of the clinic and number of participants).
3. **Host a Masters Swim Meet or Open Water Event in the last 5 years.** Served as host team of a USMS sanctioned Masters swim meet or USMS sanctioned open water event. Submit the announcement flyer or web advertisement of the meet or event which includes the date.
4. **Formal Presentation in the last 5 years.** Formal speech or multi- media presentation given at ASCA World Clinic, USMS Convention or at a major regional, national, or large community event related to Masters swimming. Examples include, but limited to your LMSC, the USMS High Performance Camp, and SwimFest. Identify talk or presentation given (date, hours of presentation, place, type of event) and brief description of what and whom you presented to. Submit announcement or web advertisement of event.



CONTRIBUTIONS	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
1. Published Articles	30	per article	120
At least two published articles in any of the following: USMS publications (<i>SWIMMER Magazine, Streamlines, Streamlines for Volunteers, Streamlines for Coaches, or on the USMS website</i>), ASCA publications (<i>American Swimming Magazine, ASCA Newsletter, Journal of Swimming Research</i>). Swimming or swim-coaching content published in other major publications may be considered as well.	<i>Include proof for each article</i>		
Category also includes serving as one of the designated online coaches providing a year's worth of USMS workouts.	60		
2. Host Masters Clinic in last 5 years	40	per hosted event	120
Hosting of a Masters clinic event. One where you served as lead coach or assistant coach at another Masters team clinic or LMSC clinic.	<i>Include proof for each camp or clinic</i>		
3. Host Masters Swim Meet or Open Water Event in last 5 years	40	per hosted event	120
Served as host team of a <u>USMS sanctioned</u> Masters swim meet or <u>USMS sanctioned</u> open water event.	<i>Include proof for each event</i>		
4. Formal Presentation in last 5 years	30	per presentation	60
Formal speech or multi-media presentation given at ASCA World Clinic, USMS Convention or at a major regional, national, or large community event related to Masters swimming (such as your LMSC)	<i>Include proof for each event</i>		
Maximum allowable points for the Contributions category:			200
Your point totals			
Note: You must achieve a minimum of 70 points in Contributions			

Use the next page for any comments on the Contributions category (if needed)

USMS Coaches Certification – Level 4 Application



Use the below area for comments on the Contributions category (if needed)



Instructions for Achievement Category

- 1. Team Participation in Competitive Swim Events.** All USMS Sanctioned Local, State, Regional meets, as well as USMS National SCY or LCM Championships, and USMS Open Water Nationals may be used. Do not include duplications of listings you will take credit for in # 2 or # 3. Please document meets and events with dates and rosters. Team participation does not include your own participation as a competitor and should reflect a substantial portion of registered club membership or group of swimmers for which you are their primary coach. Less than 5% does not constitute team participation! This category represents your ability to get team members involved in competitions.
- 2. Team Participation in USMS Events.** Team participation in USMS Fitness Events may include, but not limited to: Fitness Series Events, One Hour Swim, Check-Off Challenge, Go The Distance, or Virtual Geographic Swims. Events may also include USMS Postal Long Distance Events, USMS SwimFest Events, and a variety of USMS sponsored Challenge Events. Documentation should include rosters of participants and events by date/location. Team participation does not include your own participation in an event and should reflect a substantial portion of registered club membership or group of swimmers for which you are their primary coach. Less than 5% does not constitute team participation! This category represents your ability to get team members involved in events.
- 3. Traveling Team Participation in an event 100 miles or farther from your team pool.** Team participation in a swim clinic or swim competition more than 100 miles from the team's home pool and requiring an overnight stay. Should be a separate event from the above two categories and can include non-USMS events. Team participation does not include your own participation and should reflect a substantial portion of registered club membership or group of swimmers for which you are their primary coach. Less than 5% does not constitute team participation! This category represents your ability to get team members involved in events.



ACHIEVEMENT	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
1. Team Participation in USMS events (over last 3 years)	20	per event	100
USMS Sanctioned Local, Regional & Zone Competitions, USMS National Spring or Summer Championships, and USMS Open Water Nationals.	<i>Include listing of events and rosters of swimmers</i>		
2. Team Participation in Fitness & Other Competitive Events (last 3 years). Fitness Challenge Events, Check-Off Challenge, Go The Distance, or Fitness Swim Series as well as the One Hour Swim and USMS Postal Long Distance Events and/or SwimFest Events.	Varies		80
1-5 events in past 3 years = 20 points 6-10 events in past 3 years = 40 points 11-15 events in past 3 years = 60 points 16 or more events past 3 years = 80 pts	<i>Include listing of events and rosters</i>		
3. Traveling Team Participation (last 3 years) <i>events not used in #1 or #2 above</i>	20	per event	60
Team participation in a <u>swim clinic</u> or <u>swim competition</u> more than 100 miles from the team's home pool and requiring an overnight stay. Must be a separate event from the above two categories and may include non-USMS events.	<i>Include listing of events and rosters of swimmers</i>		
Maximum allowable points for the Achievement category:			200
Your point totals Note: <i>You must achieve a minimum of 80 points in Achievement</i>			

Use the next page for any comments on the Achievement category (if needed)

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Use the below area for comments on the Achievement category (if needed)



Instructions for Growth & Retention Category

Applicants should contact their LMSC registrar to obtain the required supporting reports to complete sections 1-3. This category takes some time to compile. Be sure to allow plenty of time to gather the requested data.

1. **Club Growth.** Increase in membership by greater than 5% per year in any of the previous three years. Please provide the membership numbers for the years in the time frame. e.g. 2017 – 40, 2018 – 59, 2019 – 72
2. **Retention.** Overall rate of greater than 80% from prior year in any of previous three years. List the numbers of retained (returning) swimmers. e.g. 2017 – 34 (of 40), 2018 – 49 (of 59), 2019 – 58 (of 72)
3. **Signed up a swimmer that had never been registered with USMS.** List names and USMS number for each swimmer from the previous three years.
4. **Started a new USMS registered club in the last ten years.** List the team(s) and year launched. Rebranding a team or relocating swimmers to a new group will not be considered.



GROWTH & RETENTION	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
1. Increase membership > 5% over the preceding year	40	per year	120
in any of the last three years - information available from your LMSC registrar	<i>Obtain from LMSC</i>		
2. Retention rate > 80% from the prior year	40	per year	120
in any of the last three years - information available from your LMSC registrar	<i>Obtain from LMSC</i>		
3. Sign up someone who has never been a registered USMS swimmer	10	per swimmer	60
in any of the last three years - information available from your LMSC registrar	<i>Obtain from LMSC</i>		
4. Start a new USMS Club from scratch	30	total	30
in any of the last ten years	<i>List club & year</i>		
Maximum allowable points for the Growth & Retention category:			240

<p>Your point totals Note: <i>You must achieve a minimum of 100 points in Growth & Retention</i></p>	
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Use the next page for any comments on the Growth & Retention category (if needed)

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Use the below area for comments on the Growth & Retention category (if needed)



Instructions for Leadership Category

1. **Service as a volunteer on either a USMS National Committee/Task Force or service as an LMSC officer during the past 5 years.** Documentation of your position and dates of service are required. Team liaison to the LMSC board is not considered an officer position for the purposes of this application.
2. **Taught Coach Continuing Education Units (CEU) during the past 5 years.** Teaching the USMS Coach Certification Courses Levels 1, 2 or 3 or teaching of USMS Coaches Continuing Education Courses. List dates, locations and attach web advertisement or announcement flyer on the course. Teaching ALTS, while a USMS program, does not count for points in this category. Points for ALTS certification and instruction may be considered in the extra credit category.
3. **Masters Coach Mentor within the last 5 years.** Please provide the name(s) of any coaches you have mentored. Please include a dated statement or letter of support describing how you have helped them develop as a coach. Letters should include your name and date at the top. These coaches should be coaches from team(s) other than your own. Coaches under your supervision or USA/USAT coaches connected with your club will not be considered.



LEADERSHIP	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
1. Service as a volunteer on a USMS National Committee or service as an LMSC Officer	Varies I	Credit for each year on each committee or Task Force	100
Service <u>during the past 5 years</u> : – Serving as LMSC Chair..... – Serving as LMSC Coaches Chair..... – Serving on LMSC (other than as Chair or Coaches Chair)..... – Serving on a USMS Committee..... – Serving as Chair of a USMS Committee or Task Force.....	...50 ...25 ...25 ...50 ...100		
2. Teaching Coaching CEUs past 5 years	25	each assignment	100
Teaching USMS Coaches Training such as Level 1-3, or USMS Coaches Continuing Education Courses	<i>Dates, Location, Flyer</i>		
3. Masters Coach Mentor in the last 5 years (letters of support required)	25	each mentorship	100
	<i>Dated letters from coaches</i>		
Maximum allowable points for the Leadership category:			250
Your point totals			
Note: <i>You must achieve a minimum of 125 points in Leadership</i>			

Use the next page for any comments on the Leadership category (if needed)



Use the below area for comments on the Leadership category (if needed)



Instructions for Education Category

- 1. Attending in-person workshops for continuing education in the last 3 years.** Continuing coaches' education workshops (not online) can be from USMS, Regional ASCA offerings, or any other nationally recognized swimming organization such as USA Swimming or USAT (if swim specific). Please provide dates, location, topics and presenter and receipt or proof of your attendance. Your attendance at USMS Level 1, 2 & 3 does not qualify for educational points, as those are core requirements for Level 4. ALTS certification will not be considered in this category but may be considered in extra credit. In order to qualify for credit, topics should be pertinent to Masters Swimming.
- 2. National Workshop Participation in the last 3 years** at the USAS-USMS Annual Convention, the ASCA World Clinic, National USMS Coaches Clinic, or USMS Coaches Continuing Education Training. Please provide documentation of workshops attended to include the workshop title, date and presenter.
- 3. Online Coaching CEUs in the last 3 years.** Online training from ASCA, USA Swimming, USMS or other national recognized swim organization and where such training is specific to Masters Swimming. For example, general topics such as nutrition, energy systems, USRPT, etc., would qualify. Videos should be at least 30 minutes in length. Please provide any documentation, such as link and notes taken to show completion of such online training.



EDUCATION	POINTS	/UNIT	MAXIMUM
1. Coaching CEU's in the last 3 years	25	per workshop	75
Points earned from attending in-person clinics offered from USMS, ASCA, USAS, or other nationally recognized swim organizations.	<i>See instructions for proof requirements</i>		
2. Workshop Participation at the USAS-USMS Annual Convention or the ASCA World Clinic (in the past 3 years)	25	per workshop	75
Please provide documentation of workshops attended to include the workshop title, date, and presenter.	<i>Please include proof</i>		
3. Online Coaching CEUs in the past 3 years.	10	per workshop	50
Online training from ASCA, USA Swimming, USMS or other national recognized swim organization. Such training must be specific to Masters swimming.	<i>See instructions for proof requirements</i>		
Maximum allowable points for the Education category:			200
Your point totals			
Note: <i>You must achieve a minimum of 100 points in Education</i>			

Use the next page for any comments on the Education category (if needed)

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Use the below area for comments on the Education category (if needed)



Instructions for Extra Credit Category

This section is to allow for additional achievements that may not fit in any of the previous categories in the application. This includes additional education, contributions, etc., for consideration. Show us what you’ve done and tell us what impact it has had on you and the Masters swimming community. As with all other categories, you should elaborate and provide documentation that sells the worthiness for what you want credit. Corroboration of what you have done or in what you have participated will be required. This category cannot compensate for a shortfall in any given category. Applicants must achieve the minimum point total in every category.

EXTRA CREDIT		MAXIMUM
<p>1. This section allows other creditable achievements, such as non-swimming specific contributions, that may have not “fit” in any of the previous categories of which were considered. It includes awards presented to you and featured articles on your accomplishments.</p>		100
<p>Examples would include publishing a book on swimming, producing and marketing a swimming video (or youtube channel), inventing and bringing to market a swim training tool, taking formal coaching related college courses, producing a weekly swimming podcast, or coming up with some new and novel way to expand or improve the adult swimming universe.</p> <p>Show us what you’ve done and tell us what impact it has had on you and/or the Masters community.</p>	<p><i>Use the next page to talk about the other ways you have contributed to our adult swimming community. Present documentation to support these achievements and / or contributions.</i></p>	
<p>Maximum allowable points for the Extra Credit category:</p>		100
<p>MAXIMUM GRAND TOTAL OF POINTS</p>		1190
<p>Your points tallied from above <i>Note: You must achieve a minimum of 650 total points for Level 4 status.</i></p>		

Use the next page for any comments on the Extra Credit category (if needed)

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Use the below area for comments on the Extra Credit category (if needed)