



Open Water Safety Plan

Application Instructions

- Before applying for a USMS open water sanction, event hosts must review their event information and safety plans with their LMSC Sanctioning Officer. Upon approval from the LMSC Sanctioning Officer, the event host is then ready to apply for sanction.
- When applying for a USMS open water sanction, event hosts are required to submit their safety plan for review and approval by the Open Water Compliance Coordinator (OWCC) ON THIS APPLICATION through the online sanction process. We welcome additional supporting information—after all, many event hosts have developed extensive safety plans over years of hosting events—but everyone must submit this completed application to ensure that all pertinent points are covered in safety planning.
- Using a Google Earth map or equivalent, event hosts are also required to upload a map of the venue and course with the safety plan application. Maps must include locations of start & finish, guide & turn buoys, feeding stations, safety craft, lifeguards/first responders, on-site medical care, and evacuation points.
- In the best scenario, the Safety Director should assist the event host in the developing the event safety plan. If the Safety Director did not take part in developing of the safety plan (usually in the case of appointment after the sanction request or in the case of a substantially unchanged safety plan developed over years of experience), the event host must give the Safety Director a copy of the approved safety plan.
- Upon request, USMS OWCC [David Miner](#) will send you a copy of the approved safety plan. Contact [David at openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org](mailto:David@openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org).

Open Water Safety Plan Application

Event Information

General Information

Name of Host: Virginia Masters Swimming
Name of Event: John Shrum Chris Greene Lake Swim Featuring 2025 USMS 1 and 2 Mile Cable Swim National Championships
Event Location: Charlottesville, VA (Chris Greene Lake Park)
City: Charlottesville State: VA LMSC: VMST
Event Dates: 5/31/2025 through 5/31/2025
Length of Swim(s): 1 and 2mile cable swims
Dual Sanctioned with USA-Swimming: No

Key Event Personnel

Event Director: Jim Miller, MD and John Post, MD Phone: 804-338-3030 and 434-979-5925
E-mail: jwmsimmd@aol.com and john@johnpostmd.com
Referee: Jim Miller, MD Phone: as above E-mail: as above
Certified Safety Director: Jim Miller, MD Phone: as above E-mail: as above

Pre-Race Safety Meeting (required): all officials & safety personnel must attend

Tentative date: 5/31/2025 Time: 6:30 for the one mile and 9:00 for the two mile
Tentative agenda: race course; positioning of life guards on shore and kayakers/rescue boats on water; swimmer signaling; radio use

Pre-Race Swimmer Meeting (required): all officials & swimmers must attend to participate in race

Tentative date: 5/31/2025 Time: 8:00 am for the one mile and 9:30 for the two mile swim
Tentative agenda: how to manage swimming around cable/other swimmers; how to signal for support from kayak/rescue boats; location of the four safety stations and kayakers; race rules (no drafting, no touching other swimmers with intent to impede racing)

Course & Event Conditions

The Course

Body of water: Lake Water type: Fresh Water Water depth from: zero entry to: > 12feet
Course: Closed-only event watercraft allowed
If open course, indicate the agency used to control the traffic while swimmers are on the course.
Agency name: The Charlottesville Water Rescue Squad – Parks & Recreation, Charlottesville
How to contact during event: radio channel and cell phone

Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards): Minimal concerns, it is a small lake with only small fish for marine life. It is small enough to not have tides. As the swim will occur before the park is open to the public, no concerns about other boats on the water.

How is the course marked?

- Turn buoy(s): Height(s) 3 feet Color(s) orange Shape(s) triangle
- Guide buoy(s): Height(s) ¼ mile cable Color(s) blue and white Shape(s) lane line
- Approximate Distance between Guide buoys: surveyed ¼ mile cable with turns and finish marked with buoys

Number of Feeding Stations: 0

Type of structure(s) used as feeding station(s): N/A

Number of people the structure(s) can safely hold: N/A

Water & Air Temperatures

Expected air temp range: 75 to 85 Expected water temp range: 78-82 Wetsuits: Not allowed

USMS Water Temperature Index for sanctioned open water events:

- Below 57°F (Very Cold) – heat retaining swimwear and a Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 57°F-60°F (Cold) - heat-retaining swimwear is required or a Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 60°F-66°F (Quite cool) - Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **RECOMMENDED**
- 66°F-72°F (Fairly cool) - Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims is **ENCOURAGED**
- 72°F-78°F (Cool) - No Thermal Plan required
- 78°F-82°F (Optimal) - Heat-retaining swimwear & neoprene caps are not permitted above 78°F.
- 82°F-85°F (Warm) - Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims is **RECOMMENDED**
- 85°F-87.8°F (Very warm) - Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims is **REQUIRED**
- 87.8°F-95°F (Hot) - Sanctioned open water swims cannot be held
- Over 95°F (Extremely hot) - Any swimming is ill-advised

USMS Water Temperature Measurement Procedure: Using an accurate thermometer, the event host should take three to five measurements at various places on the course—12 to 18 inches below the water surface and no closer to the shore than 25 meters (if possible)—within one hour before the start of an open water swim. The host should average these measurements, post and/or announce the resulting average temperature at least 30 minutes before the start of the swim, and announce it during the pre-race staff safety and swimmers' meetings.

Water Quality

It is recommended that one week before the event, check water quality. If results returned are inconsistent with the local governing body's standards, notify swimmers who participated in the event of any known exposures post-race. If an exceptional event such as heavy rain or flooding affects the water quality, the Event Director, Referee, or Safety Director shall have the authority to postpone or cancel the race. It is recommended to take and retain water samples on race day and retain for reference.

As the park is maintained by the Charlottesville Parks and Recreation Department, I will confirm water quality with the department the day prior to the event and with the lifeguards the morning of the event. I will test the water temperature in the middle of the lake the morning of the event.

Event Safety

Medical Personnel

Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site: Pete Davidson, EMT

Experience in sporting events (Marathon, Triathlon, Open water swim, etc.): Yes

Will medical personnel be located on the course? Yes

The number of medical personnel will be dependent on the course layout, number of swimmers in the water, expected conditions, etc. How many medical personnel do you plan to have on site? 4

First Responders/Lifeguards & Monitors

Indicate the qualifications of the first responders: Equivalent water certified first responder

Number on course: 4

Number on land: 4

Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map.

Two will be located at the race start, 2 will be in kayaks on the race course (they will follow any swimmers of potential concern as the race progresses), 2 will be in the rescue squad power boat and at least 2 rescue squad scuba divers will be in the water

Onsite Medical Care & Facilities

Describe onsite set up for medical care, such as medical treatment tent, heating/cooling tent or facility. etc., and indicate locations on the Race Plan Map. The Charlottesville Water Rescue Squad will be present with Advanced Life Support Equipment and a team of 12-20 rescue personnel, divers, and water rescue boats. They will serve as the primary emergency responder on site from 7am until the end of both races. In addition they have access to a Rescue Station with a Medic Ambulance across from the airport (4 minute response time). Lake Monticello and Western Albemarle Rescue will assist as well.

Ambulance/Emergency Transportation & Nearby Medical Facilities

Ambulance(s) onsite: Yes

On Call: 911

Have you spoken with local emergency response agency regarding potential emergencies? Yes

Closest medical facility: University of Virginia Medical Center

Phone: 434-924-3627

Type of medical facility (urgent care, hospital, etc.): Advanced Level V Hospital and Trauma Center

Distance to closest medical facility: 5-10 miles Approximate transport time: 12 minutes

Watercraft

Motorized Watercraft:

- Owned/operated by government agencies (Coast Guard, police, fire & rescue, etc.): 2
- Owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals: 0

Will all motorized watercraft with a propeller owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals be equipped either with a propeller guard or a swimmer monitor? Yes

Other motorized watercraft:

- With propellers fore of the rudder: 0
- With impeller motor (jet ski, jet boat): 1

- Anchored from start to finish: 0

Allocation of Watercraft:

- Safety Watercraft:
 - 1st Responders: Motorized: 2 Non-motorized: 2
 - 2nd Responders: Motorized: **0** Non-motorized: **4**
- Watercraft for race officials: Motorized: 0 Non-motorized: 0
- Watercraft for race supervision: Motorized: 0 Non-motorized: 0
- Watercraft for feeding stations: Motorized: 0 Non-motorized: 0
- Watercraft for escorted events: Motorized: 0 Non-motorized: 0
- Other event watercraft: 8 added kayaks – one with lead swimmer, one with last swimmer, one at each of the turn ends, 2 surveying the swim, 2 overseeing the warm-up/warm-down area

Emergency Signal Flag Color for all watercraft: orange

Communications

Primary method between event officials: Radio Secondary method: Megaphone/Bullhorn

Primary method between medical personnel, first responders & safety craft: Radio (separate channel from Meet Officials)

Secondary method: Cell Phone

Swimmer Counting & Accountability

Describe method of swimmer body numbering: Black Sharpie on both shoulders, hands

Describe method of electronic identification of swimmer (Recommended): none

Describe different bright cap colors for various divisions (Recommended): none

Describe method of accounting for all swimmers before, during and after swim(s): count and track on paper

Describe method of accounting for swimmers who do not finish: count upon exit and track on paper

Warm-up/Warm-down Safety Plan

Describe safety plan for warm-up/warm-down, include number and location of lifeguards and designated watercraft. Warm up and Warm Down will be monitored by a volunteer in a kayak. Set times will be allocated before/after each swim and communicated during check in/at the safety meeting pre-race. When the area is not monitored, it will be closed. It will be separated from the race course.

Swimmer Management

Maximum number of swimmers on course at a time: 100

If more swimmers show up on the day of the swim(s), how will you adjust the safety plan to accommodate the increased number of entries? They will not be allowed to enter, entries close before race day. There are no one deck registrations.

How will you deploy the safety staff and crafts distributed to supervise this event to ensure swift recognition, rescue, and treatment of any swimmer? Safety crew will be at the start, turn buoys, and mid-course. Also, a kayak will be with the lead swimmer and another with the last swimmer. No swimmer will ever be outside of shouting distance from a support craft. Safety crew will be trained to recognize and respond to swimmers in distress.

How will you deploy the safety staff to maximize rapid response to a troubled swimmer? Radio/phone communication between land and water safety support.

How will you alter the event if insufficient safety personnel/craft are available on the day of the swim(s)? Pull on land volunteers to support in on water safety responsibilities.

Describe your missing swimmer plan: Deploy rescue crew members to search for the swimmer. Given the small size of the lake and proximity between swimmers and rescue crew members I do not foresee this being a problem.

Severe Weather Plan

Is a lightning detector or weather radio available on site? Yes

Describe your plan for severe weather or natural disaster: In the event of inclement weather or other unsafe conditions that could arise suddenly while swimmers are competing, the referee will consult with the Safety Coordinator and the Albemarle Rescue Crew Captain to make a decision about evacuating swimmers.

Describe your course and site evacuation plan, including accounting for all swimmers and other participants: If evacuation is deemed necessary and safe, the Rescue Captain will communicate the message to all rescue personnel on the water via walkie-talkie/cell phone and swimmers will be notified to stop swimming by three sharp blasts from a whistle. Competitors will be instructed to exit the water by swimming to the closest beach (start/ finish beach area or the water rescue beach area to the northwest). If inclement weather is a concern, all competitors who exit the water will be instructed to report to the bath house shelter.

Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims

General Information

Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims: USMS Rules for Open Water Swims state:

- 302.2.2A (1) A swim shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 60° F. (15.6° C.), unless heat-retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers or a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.
- 302.2.2A (2) A swim in which heat retaining swimwear is required of all swimmers shall not begin if the water temperature is less than 57° F. (13.9° C.), unless a USMS-approved thermal plan is in place.

Remember that the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to cold water, so even a small drop in water temperature—especially in the colder ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues: Cold Shock Response, Cold Incapacitation, Hypothermia, and Circum-rescue Collapse). Be Prepared!

- If your swim course has a remote chance of water temperature less than 60° F., you are **REQUIRED** to complete the thermal plan below, showing your specific commitment to increased swimmer preparation before the event, reduced swimmer exposure during the event, and maximize mitigation & treatment of thermal issues during & after the event.
- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 60° F & 66° F., a thermal plan is **RECOMMENDED**.
- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 66° F & 72° F., a thermal plan is **ENCOURAGED**.

How will you assist swimmer preparation before the event:

The following methods are among the ways you can do this:

1. Emphasize & stress on entry information of possible cold water swim conditions.
2. Require prior cold water swim experience.
3. Require swimmer cold water preparation plan.

4. Refuse entry if swimmer is not acclimated to cold water swimming.

What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take: N/A The water temperature will not be within the range of risk for cold water shock concerns.

What action will you take to reduce swimmer exposure to thermal issues:

The following methods are among the ways you can do this:

1. Cancel the swim(s).
2. Shorten swim(s) or institute/shorten time limits.
3. Encourage wetsuits for all swimmers.
4. Require wetsuits for all swimmers.

Explain your plan of action: N/A.

What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate & treat symptoms of thermal issues:

The following methods are among the ways you can do this:

1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.
2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.
3. Bring in more emergency craft and first responders on the course.
4. Increase warm beverages before the swim and at feeding stations.
5. Have special procedures (different than normal) for removing swimmers from the water & venue.
6. Increase warm beverages after the swim.
7. Increase thermal treatment gear (blankets, hot water bottles, etc.)
8. Warm showers are already available on-site.
9. Make warming facilities (buildings, tents, vehicles, etc.) available on-site.
10. Other: [Specify](#)

Specify what extra listed items you will provide: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues: [Click here to enter text.](#)

If the water temperature is below 72° F, will you be prepared to deal with cold water medical issues: N/A

Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims

General Information

Thermal Plan for Warm Water Swims: USMS Rule 302.2.2A(3) for Open Water Swims states:

“A swim of 5K or greater shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 29.45° C. (85°F.). A swim of less than 5K shall not begin if the water temperature exceeds 31° C. (87.8°F.).”

Remember that the average masters swimmer does little or no acclimatization to warm water, so even a small increase in water temperature—especially in the warmer ranges—dramatically increases the odds of thermal issues: Dehydration, Heat Stroke, and Hyperthermia. Be Prepared!

- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature from 85° F to 87.8° F, you are **REQUIRED** to complete the thermal plan below, showing your specific commitment to increased swimmer preparation before the event, reduced swimmer exposure during the event, and maximize mitigation & treatment of thermal issues during & after the event.

- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 82° F & 85° F., a thermal plan is **RECOMMENDED**.

How will you assist swimmer preparation before the event:

The following methods are among the ways you can do this:

1. Emphasize & stress on entry information of possible warm water swim conditions.
2. Require prior warm water swim experience.
3. Require swimmer warm water preparation plan.

What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take: While the water/air temperature conditions are not likely to be warm enough to cause over heating concerns, we will have cool water and a spot out of direct sun

for overheated swimmers to rest. During the safety meeting we will stress awareness/communication to the swimmers.

What action will you take to reduce swimmer, official, and staff exposure to heat-related issues:

The following methods are among the ways you can do this:

1. Cancel the swim(s).
2. Shorten swim(s) or institute/shorten time limits.
3. Remind all participants to stay well hydrated.
4. Remind swimmers to select appropriate pace.
5. Make swim caps optional or use Lycra swim caps.

Explain your plan of action: Cancel the swim or shorten depending on the heat level.

What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate & treat symptoms of heat-related issues:

The following methods are among the ways you can do this:

1. Bring in more emergency trained medical personnel and/or ambulances.
2. Bring in more volunteers to assist medical personnel.
3. Bring in more emergency craft and first responders on the course.
4. Increase cool beverages before, during and after the swim (for swimmers and staff, including extra cool beverages on watercraft and feeding stations)
5. Increase heat exhaustion and heat stroke treatment gear (iced water, ice chips, cold water bottles, misting tents/fans, etc.)
6. Make cool showers available on-site.
7. Make shade and cooling facilities (buildings, tents, etc.) available on-site.
8. Other: [Specify](#)

Specify what extra listed items you will need to provide: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues: Ensure that medical/safety staff on site are aware of how to recognize over heating concerns in swimmers. Ensure that the medical/safety staff is appropriately trained to prioritize care based on the severity of need of the patient.

If the water temperature is above 82° F, will you be prepared to deal with heat-related medical issues:
Yes.