



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 or 941-545-9709.

Open Water Safety Plan Application

Event Information

General Information

Name of Host: South Whidbey Island Masters

Name of Event: Whidbey Adventure Swim

Event Location: Seawall Park, Saratoga Passage

City: Langley State: WA LMSC: PNA

Event Dates: 6/1/2025

Length of Swim(s): 1.2 and 2.4 mile distances

Dual Sanctioned with USA-Swimming: No

Key Event Personnel

Event Director: Teresa Forsyth Phone: 360-929-2940 E-mail: racedirector@whidbeyadventureswim.org

Referee: Teresa Forsyth Phone: 360-929-2940 E-mail: racedirector@whidbeyadventureswim.org

Certified Safety Director: : Emily Bell Phone: 425-293-9475 E-mail: em.w.bell@gmail.com

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

Tentative date: 6/1/2025

Time: 8:15 AM

Tentative agenda:

- Course and Race Description: where personnel positions are during the race, buoys, layout, start/finish.
- Safety Procedures: the resources, how personnel will interact with swimmers and other officials/personnel.
- Race cancellation and evacuation routes.

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

Tentative date: 6/1/2025

Time: 8:30AM

Tentative agenda:

- Course and Race Description: start/finish, where to turn, water temp
- Safety Procedures: the resources, how you will interact with the resources, asking for assistance
- Pulling swimmers or a swimmer choosing to withdraw: do not leave the race without checking in
- Cold water safety and hypothermia symptoms and procedures
- If conditions are exceptionally windy, swimmers will be informed of collapsed shortened course
- Race cancellation and evacuation routes

Course & Event Conditions

The Course

Body of water: Ocean Water type: Salt Water Water depth from: 3ft to 20 ft

Course: Open - non-event watercraft allowed near swim course

If open course, indicate the agency used to control the traffic while swimmers are on the course.

Agency name: Fire District Rescue How to contact during event: cell phone

Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards): Slack tide with minimum current will be approx 9AM.

How is the course marked?

- Turn buoy(s): Height(s) 5 ft Color(s) yellow Shape(s) upright cylinder
- Guide buoy(s): Height(s) 3 ft Color(s) red Shape(s) triangular
- Approximate Distance between Guide buoys: The course is a 1.2 mile by 20-yard rectangle with turn buoys halfway (yellow turn buoys 0.6-mile for 1.2-mile distance; 1.2 miles for 2.4-mile distance). Guide buoys approximately half way down each side, and at end of route rectangle.

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: 55-65 Deg F

Expected water temp range: 54-60 Deg F

Wetsuits: Required

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.

Water quality has never been an issue in Saratoga Passage. Water quality will be checked by Puget Sound Keeper if indicated. <https://pugetsoundkeeper.org/swimguide>

Event Safety

Medical Personnel

Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site:

4 South Whidbey Fire/EMS personnel

1 RN

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? 5

First Responders/Lifeguards & Monitors

Indicate the qualifications of the first responders: ARC Lifeguards

Number on course: 8

Number on land: 2

Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map. Indicated by red X's on map located at end of Event Safety section of this document.

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.

An ambulance, nurse, and medical tent will be stationed at Seawall Park, indicated by blue X on the map, located at the end of Event Safety section of this document.

Ambulance/Emergency Transportation & Nearby Medical Facilities

Ambulance(s) onsite: 1 On Call: number TBD

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

Closest medical facility: Whidbey General Hospital Phone: 360-678-5151

Type of medical facility (urgent care, hospital, etc.): Hospital

Distance to closest medical facility: more than 20 miles Approximate transport time: 30

Watercraft

Motorized Watercraft:

- Owned/operated by government agencies (Coast Guard, police, fire & rescue, etc.): 1
- Owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals: 2-3

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): 0
- Anchored from start to finish: all motorboats

Allocation of Watercraft:

- Safety Watercraft:
 - 1st Responders: Motorized: 1 Non-motorized: 8 lifeguards on paddle boards
 - 2nd Responders: Motorized: 2 Non-motorized: 12+ kayaks
- Watercraft for race officials: Motorized: N/A Non-motorized: 1 kayak
- Watercraft for race supervision: Motorized: 3 Non-motorized: 20
- Watercraft for feeding stations: Motorized: N/A Non-motorized: N/A
- Watercraft for escorted events: Motorized: N/A Non-motorized: N/A
- Other event watercraft: None

Emergency Signal Flag Color for all watercraft: Red

Communications

Primary method between event officials: Cell Phone. Secondary method: Radio

Primary method between medical personnel, first responders & safety craft: Cell phone

Swimmer Counting & Accountability

Describe method of swimmer body numbering: both hands and/or exposed arms, and on caps

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

Describe different bright cap colors for various divisions (Recommended): . Orange for the 1.2 and bright green for the 2.4

Describe method of accounting for all swimmers before, during and after swim(s): Popsicle sticks in/out with swimmer ID numbers, numbers on exposed hands/arms. Webscorer will be utilized to track numbers and name of swimmers during event.

Describe method of accounting for swimmers who do not finish:

Phone contact will be maintained throughout the event between on-water support and on-shore. If a swimmer is pulled, their number will be noted on shore so they are accounted for.

Warm-up/Warm-down Safety Plan

Describe safety plan for warm-up/warm-down, include number and location of lifeguards and designated watercraft.

4 lifeguards and 4 kayaks will be posted around start to monitor warm ups before the safety briefing. At the time of the safety briefing, all swimmers will be cleared from the water.

Swimmer Management

Maximum number of swimmers on course at a time: 125

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?

No day-of registration allowed.

How will you deploy the safety staff and crafts distributed to supervise this event to ensure swift recognition, rescue, and treatment of any swimmer?

8 lifeguards and 12 kayakers will be spaced along race route, to assist any swimmer in need.

How will you deploy the safety staff to maximize rapid response to a troubled swimmer?

Lifeguards and kayakers will attend a pre-race meeting to receive instructions on how to assist a swimmer in trouble. They all will have whistles, flags, and/or cell phones to signal rescue powerboats if a swimmer needs to be removed from the race. Lifeguards will also have a mandatory rescue training meeting one week before the race.

How will you alter the event if insufficient safety personnel/craft are available on the day of the swim(s)?

We will cancel the event.

Describe your missing swimmer plan: If a swimmer is reported missing, the race director will request via loud-speaker that the swimmer come to the registration table. The race director (or other race coordinator) will call the swimmer's cell phone. If the swimmer cannot be reached, the race director will alert via cell phone the head

lifeguard, safety boats, and volunteers on shore at evacuation points, alerting them to the situation, asking for a search of the swimmer's cap number on the course. If the swimmer cannot be located, 911 will be called by the medical staff and the lifeguards will start an under-water search.

Severe Weather Plan

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

Describe your plan for severe weather or natural disaster:

The Referee and Safety Director are responsible for determining if the event can proceed. The event may be delayed, interrupted or cancelled. If the event is delayed or interrupted, the Referee and Safety director will agree that the event can continue. The Meet Director will be responsible for and announcing event cancellation. If race cancellation needs to be called before the race begins, we would announce rescheduling if possible.

In the instance of rough but safely-swimmable conditions, the Referee and Safety Director may choose to shorten the course from 2.4- to 1.2-mile distance.

If a race has begun and we need to interrupt due to severe weather, we would notify Fire Department Rescue and power boat pilots immediately by radio or cell phone that the event has been interrupted. Boaters will notify lifeguards and kayakers immediately. Kayaks and guards will inform swimmers. Guards, kayaks and boats will direct swimmers toward the nearest course evacuation points. Race crew would follow the course evacuation plan, and verify that all participants are accounted for.

Describe your course and site evacuation plan, including accounting for all swimmers and other participants:

Three points will be identified and marked along the shore of the race course for evacuation.

Point A — start/finish line

Point B — beach at mid-course

Point C — beach at the farthest turn point

Kayaks and lifeguards will direct swimmers to the nearest area of refuge. Race crew will have staff at each location to assist swimmer evacuation and check-in tally with cap number for final head count of all swimmers. Blankets and towels will be available at each evacuation point for swimmer safety. No swimmers will leave their evacuation point until directed by the safety crew. Once directed, swimmers will be moved as follows:

Point A — swimmers are free to leave.

Point B — swimmers and race crew will proceed along the beach as a group back to Seawall Park.

Point C — swimmers and race crew will proceed along the beach as a group back to Seawall Park.

It is expected to take up to 45 minutes to move swimmers back to the start/finish area at Seawall Park.

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:

Cold water information on entry

Cold water information in swimmer safety briefing
Requirement for wetsuits

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: All of the above. Require wetsuits unless a waiver is granted by the race director. Time limit for 1.2 mile event of 60 minutes; 2.4 mile 1:45 minutes.

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. Make warm showers available on-site.
9. Make warming facilities (buildings, tents, vehicles, etc.) available on-site.
10. Other:

Specify what extra listed items you will provide:

#4,5, 6, 7, 8, and 9: Warm beverages, blankets, and hot water bottles will be available before and after the swim. Hot showers are available at the marina a short walk from Seawall Park. Ambulance will be on site.

Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues:

First responders will be available both on the water and on shore, including EMTs, lifeguards, and a registered nurse. Additional emergency responders, if called via 9-1-1, are 5 miles away.

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

First responders will be available both on the water and on shore, including EMTs, lifeguards, and a registered nurse. Additional emergency responders, if called via 9-1-1, are 5 miles away.

COURSE MAP

Lifeguard/first-responder placement (red Xs); nurse, ambulance, and med tent location (blue X)

