

# **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:openwateradvisor@usmastersswimming.org) or 941-545-9709.

# Open Water Safety Plan Application

## Event Information

### General Information

Name of Host: Bernardo's All Stars  
Name of Event: Swim Defiance  
Event Location: Owen Beach, Point Defiance Park, Commencement Bay  
City: Tacoma State: WA LMSC: PNA  
Event Dates: 08/02/2024 Through: 08/02/2024  
Length of Swim(s): 1.2 mile & 2.4 mile  
Dual Sanctioned with USA-Swimming: NO

### Key Event Personnel

Event Director	Diana Hermanson	Phone: 253-426-0588	E-mail: swimdefiance@gmail.com
Referee:	Serrell Collins	Phone: 253-753-3164	E-mail: serrell@hotmail.com
Certified Safety Director:	Douglas Hermanson	Phone: 360-239-9134	E-mail: swimdefiance@gmail.com

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

Tentative date: 08/02/2024 Time: 12:20 pm

Tentative agenda:

- Introduction
- Review DOR Schedule/Course Map/Safety Plan
- Radio Communications Plan
- Kayaker/Lifeguard Briefing
- Boat traffic control
- Read Kayaker/Lifeguard briefing (included below)

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

Tentative date: 08/02/2024 Time: 12:50 pm

Tentative agenda:

- Review of course map and tide information
- Swimmer accounting procedures
- Read Swimmer Responsibilities Handout (included below)

## Course & Event Conditions

### The Course

Body of water: Commencement Bay  
Water type: Salt Water  
Water depth from: 10 to: 75 feet  
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: Tacoma Maritime Institute, West Pierce County Sheriff and USCG.

How to contact during event: VHF Radio: Race Channel 14 Marine Channel 9

Boat traffic control:

Recreational boat traffic: Power boats are the boundary between the harbor and the course. Power boats prevent general boat traffic from entering the course at high speeds. They will direct boats around the course when there is no danger to swimmers.

Expected water conditions for the swimmers: (marine life, tides, currents, underwater hazards):

The 1:30pm start will be 60 minutes before high tide at 2:32pm with the expected current of .2 knots; moving to slack at 3:17pm. At the current expected race cut off time at 4:00pm the current is expected to be at knots .1.

Marine life will include jellyfish and curious seals.

There are no underwater hazards on the course.

Water temperature will vary between 56 and 61 F

How is the course marked?

- Turn buoy(s): 3 Triangular red buoys
- Guide buoy(s): Height(s) 4 ft Color(s) Yellow Shape(s) Cylinder
- Approximate Distance between Guide buoys: Buoys will be placed approximately 200yds apart.
- The finish will be marked by a 25 foot tall Yellow inflatable arch

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 Expected water temp range: 56-61 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, 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.

Consult current advisories posted by Department of Ecology, State of Washington

# Event Safety

## Medical Personnel

Lead medical personnel (emergency trained) on site: Douglas Hermanson, EMT trained + 30 years boating and water safety experience.

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 nurses and 1 medical doctor.

## First Responders/Lifeguards & Monitors

Indicate the qualifications of the first responders: ARC Lifeguards

Number on course: 4 Number on land: 2

Indicate their location on the Race Plan Map.

## 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. There will be heating pads, warm fluids, warming tents and cars with experienced volunteers. See site map.

## Ambulance/Emergency Transportation & Nearby Medical Facilities

Ambulance(s) onsite: No On Call: 911

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

Closest medical facility: Multicare Tacoma General Hospital Phone: 253-403-1000

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

Distance to closest medical facility: 8 miles Approximate transport time: 12 minutes

## Watercraft

Motorized Watercraft:

- Owned/operated by government agencies (Coast Guard, police, fire & rescue, etc.): 3
- Owned/operated by volunteers or hired individuals: 6-8

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: 6-8
- With impeller motor (jet ski, jet boat): 2-3
- Anchored from start to finish: 2

Allocation of Watercraft:

- Safety Watercraft:
  - 1st Responders: Motorized: 2 Non-motorized: 4

○ 2nd Responders: Motorized: 2-3 Non-motorized: 0

- Watercraft for race officials: Motorized: 1 Non-motorized: 0
- Watercraft for race supervision: Motorized: 6-8 Non-motorized: 15-20
- Watercraft for feeding stations: Motorized: 0 Non-motorized: 0
- Watercraft for escorted events: Motorized: 0 Non-motorized: 0
- Other event watercraft: N/A

Emergency Signal Flag Color for all watercraft: Orange

### **Communications**

Primary method between event officials:

Cell Phone

Secondary method: Megaphone/PA System

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

VHF Radio channel separate from meet official

Secondary method: Cell Phone

### **Swimmer Counting & Accountability**

Describe method of swimmer body numbering: Numbers on Hands and Caps

Describe method of electronic identification of swimmer: Webscorer race timing system

Describe different wave distinction: 2.4 mile wave Pink, 1.2 mile wave Bright Green

Describe method of accounting for all swimmers before, during and after swim(s): Swimmers will hand numbered popsicle stick to the race officials prior to entering the water. Upon exiting the water at the finish swimmer will present to the timing table with their swimmer number so the matching numbered popsicle stick can go into a container. Sticks and numbers will be reconciled to account for all swimmers.

Describe method of accounting swimmers while in the water: There will be 2 kayakers on the course responsible for taking a count of all swimmers at least once during the swim.

Describe method of accounting for swimmers who do not finish: Names and numbers of non-finishing swimmers will be radioed to on-site personnel.

### **Warm-up/Warm-down Safety Plan**

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

Lifeguards will be posted near the start before the race to allow for swimmer warmup.

Maximum number of swimmers on course at a time: 100

If more swimmers show up on the day of the swim, how will you adjust the safety plan to accommodate the increased number of entries? No day of event entries 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? Race has 4 layers of safety:

#1 is Coast Guard Auxiliary for fast approaching water craft.

#2 TMI Power Safety Boats with at least one swimmer observer in addition to the boat captain.

#3 one TMI zodiac boat, 1 Tacoma Police Boat, 1 PCFD13 Zodiac with aquatic rescue boards,

#4 is lifeguards on paddleboards/kayaks and kayak volunteers (see race map)

### Severe Weather Plan

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

Describe your plan for severe weather or natural disaster:

- Severe weather, such as lightning
- Coast Guard determination of unsafe conditions
- Race director or safety director determination of unsafe conditions.

Thunderstorm activity in the area will be traced and potential time of arrival at the race site will be monitored to determine if it is safe to start the race or if the course must be evacuated. Time estimates for completion of course evacuation will be a prime consideration in making this decision.

Triggers for delaying or stopping the race are conditions that would make it unsafe to proceed with the swim and may either be present at the start of the swim or have a high probability of developing during the swim. Cancellation triggers include:

- Visibility less than 1 miles. Factors may include fog, rain, smoke or haze. Hard rain that affects course visibility, makes sighting/navigation difficult for swimmers or affects ability of crew to monitor swimmers.
- Strong wind, advisably Force 5 or wind that makes sighting/navigation difficult for swimmers or affects the ability of crew to monitor swimmers. Prior to the event start the Race Director is responsible for determining event cancellation after consultation with the Safety Director, Sheriff Department, Water Rescue and U.S. Coast Guard. The Race Director is responsible for announcing the event cancellation. If Owen Beach is closed, the race will be cancelled. No other finish area will be considered.

Traffic: swimmers will be pulled from water if immediate danger from private boating is present. Swimmers may resume swimming after hazard(s) have passed or been removed.

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

If the race is stopped after it starts, the Safety//Race Directors will immediately notify the U.S. Coast Guard, TMI, Pierce County Sheriff staff, Power Boat Pilots, lead kayak and lead lifeguard by radio (or cell phone) that the event has been stopped and finish area staff and all boats will issue 5 X 1 second blasts (=danger) from the air horn until all swimmers and volunteers are notified. This may be repeated several times to be sure all water safety crew volunteers are informed. Jet skis/Zodiacs shall notify lifeguards and kayaks immediately. Kayaks and lifeguards shall inform swimmers that the race has been stopped and where to go. Swimmers farthest from shore will be picked up by roving power boats first and transported to the start area. Other swimmers by shore will be stopped and asked to swim to the closest shore as quickly and safely as possible. Swimmers that continue to Owen Beach will report to the finish area. It is estimated that it will take 20 minutes to complete the course evacuation.

Prior to the event start the Race Director is responsible for determining event cancellation after consultation with the Safety Director, Sheriff Department, Water Rescue and U.S. Coast Guard. The Race Director is responsible for announcing the event cancellation. If Owen Beach is closed, the race will be cancelled. No other finish area will be considered and all entrants will have been accounted for, if cancellation occurs. Check in the athletes and hand out any caps and shirts, announce plans for rescheduling if possible. If cancellation is due to something completely beyond the control of the event hosts (i.e. weather), a refund will be calculated from any funds saved with the cancellation. If the cancellation is a result of the host's organizing (or lack of), a reasonable refund, or credit toward the next race will be made. During the event the Safety Director is responsible for determining whether the race will be delayed or stopped after consultation with the Race Director, TMI, Sheriff Water Rescue Captain and U.S. Coast Guard. Owen Beach has a large stretch of Beach, if the initial finishing area becomes unusable, the Safety Directors may choose to move it to another area along the beach but still within the Metro Parks designated Owen Beach area. There will be no other finish beach considered.

## Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims

General Information
<p>Thermal Plan for Cold Water Swims: USMS Rules for Open Water Swims state:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>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!</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- If your swim course has a remote chance of water temperature less than 60° F., you are <b>REQUIRED</b> 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 &amp; treatment of thermal issues during &amp; after the event.</li> <li>- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 60° F &amp; 66° F., a thermal plan is <b>RECOMMENDED</b>.</li> <li>- If your swim course has a chance of water temperature between 66° F &amp; 72° F., a thermal plan is <b>ENCOURAGED</b>.</li> </ul>

### 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: Website has clear information on how to conduct cold water preparation. Escorted preparatory cold water swims will be hosted free of charge starting at least 1 month prior to the event date.

### 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.

What method(s) of swimmer preparation will you take: Website has clear information on how to conduct cold water preparation. Escorted preparatory swims are hosted free of charge at least 1 month prior to the event.

<b>What extra medical care will you provide to mitigate &amp; treat symptoms of thermal issues:</b>
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**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: Warming tent and warming cars both available

Specify what extra listed items you will provide: There will also be warm beverages and food.

Comment on how you will be prepared to care for multiple medical issues: We will have multiple professionals and first responders on hand both on various boats and on shore that can give direction to other volunteers to care for and assist with multiple issues.

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

- Laminated signs of hypothermia guides for safety layer 4 personnel.
- Medical volunteers and experienced finish line volunteers will assess each swimmer at the finish line; if issues are evident the swimmer will be whisked off to the warming tent or car, dried and plied with war, fluids and pads.
- Swimmer's family/friends will be alerted to monitor swimmer along with volunteers. Announcer will continuously encourage swimmers to seek medical attention at warming tent if issues are delayed in manifestation.



## Petition for Swim Defiance Wetsuit Waiver 2025

To ensure a swimmer attempting the swim without a wetsuit is prepared and experienced. Swim Defiance Safety Committee has mandated they complete a Petition to swim without a wetsuit. After the return of completed form, the Race director will review and may follow up with conversation to ascertain if the swimmer is adequately prepared and can successfully complete the crossing.

### **Swim Defiance Open Water Swim**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
USMS# \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mark any/all that are applicable

\_\_\_\_\_ I have experience swimming in 60 degree or below water without a wetsuit

\_\_\_\_\_ I have experience swimming in coastal waters

\_\_\_\_\_ I have experience in USMS open water category 1 non-wetsuit swimming

\_\_\_\_\_ This is not my first Open Water Event

Previous Events (Name/Date):

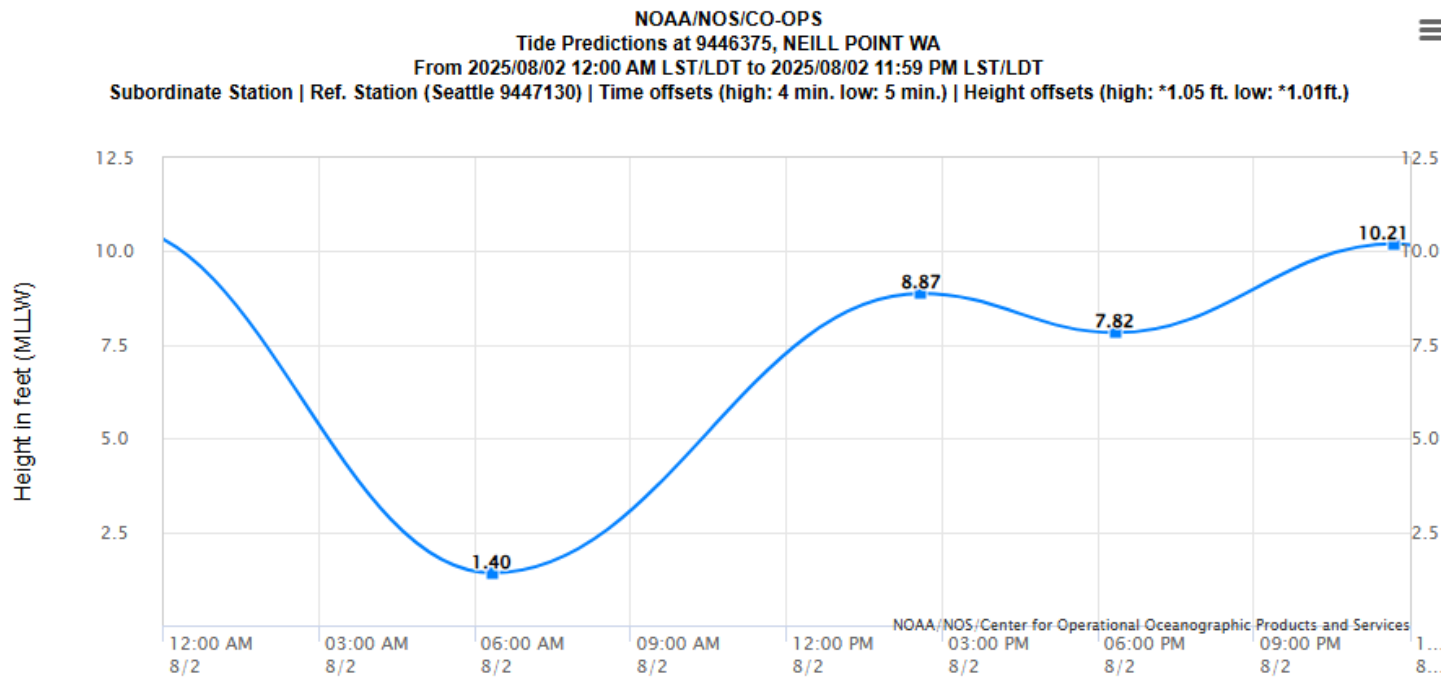
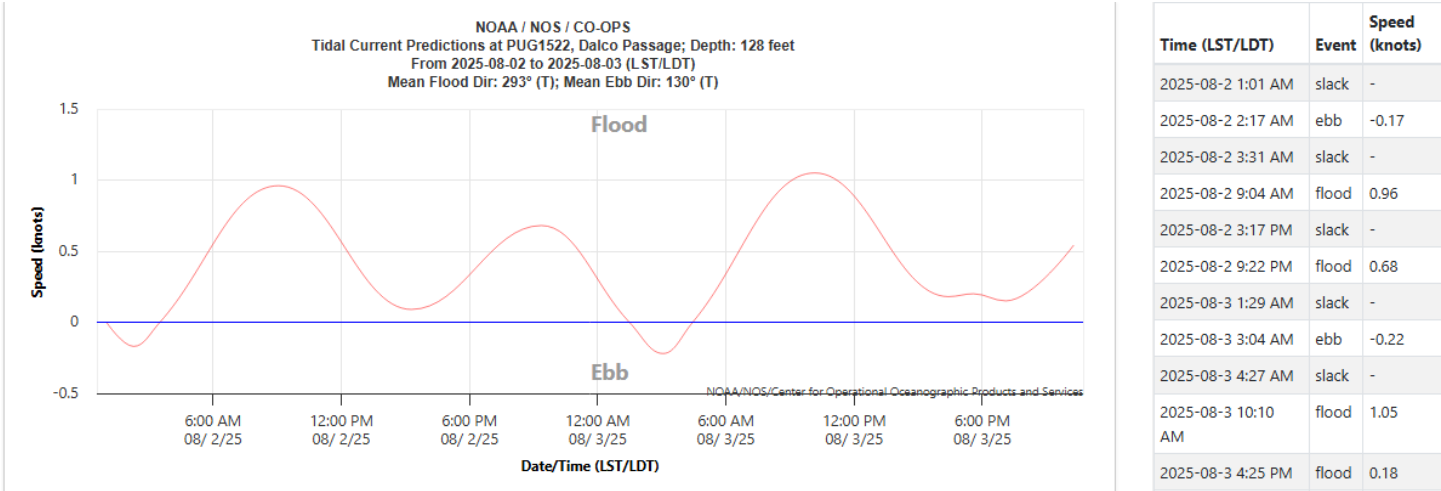
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Must be signed and dated for acceptance.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: \_\_\_\_\_ or email PDF copy: swimdefiance@gmail.com  
Diana Hermanson  
2318 120th St E., Tacoma, WA 98445

# Swim Defiance 2025 Tides and Currents



# SWIM DEFIANCE SITE MAP



## Course Map









## PARTICIPANT WAIVER AND RELEASE OF LIABILITY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

For and in consideration of United States Masters Swimming, Inc. ("USMS") allowing me, the undersigned, to participate in any USMS sanctioned or approved activity, including swimming camps, clinics, and exhibitions; learn-to-swim programs; swimming tryouts; fitness and training programs (including dryland training); swim practices and workouts (for both pool and open water); pool meets; open water competitions; local, regional, and national competitions and championships (both pool and open water); and/or related activities ("Event" or "Events"); I, for myself, and on behalf of my spouse, children, heirs and next of kin, and any legal and personal representatives, executors, administrators, successors, and assigns, hereby agree to and make the following contractual representations pursuant to this Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement (the "Agreement");

1. I hereby certify and represent that (i) I am in good health and in proper physical condition to participate in the Events; and (ii) I have not been advised of any medical conditions that would impair my ability to safely participate in the Events. I agree that it is my sole responsibility to determine whether I am sufficiently fit and healthy enough to participate in the Events.
2. I acknowledge the inherent risks associated with the sport of swimming. I understand that my participation involves risks and dangers, which include, without limitation, the potential for serious bodily injury, sickness and disease, permanent disability, paralysis and death (from drowning or other causes); loss of or damage to personal property and equipment; exposure to extreme conditions and circumstances; accidents involving other participants, event staff, volunteers or spectators; contact or collision with natural or manmade objects; dangers arising from adverse weather conditions; imperfect water conditions; water and surface hazards; facility issues; equipment failure; inadequate safety measures; participants of varying skill levels; situations beyond the immediate control of the Event organizers; and other undefined, not readily foreseeable and presently unknown risks and dangers ("Risks"). I understand that these Risks may be caused in whole or in part by my own actions or inactions, the actions or inactions of others participating in the Events, or the negligent acts or omissions of the Released Parties defined below, and I hereby expressly assume all such Risks and responsibility for any damages, liabilities, losses or expenses that I incur as a result of my participation in any Events.
3. I agree to be familiar with and to abide by the Rules and Regulations, including the [Code of Conduct](#) and any safety regulations established by USMS. I accept sole responsibility for my own conduct and actions while participating in the Events.
4. I acknowledge the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk that I may be exposed to or infected by COVID-19, or other viral or bacterial infection, while participating in any of the Events, and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, and death. I agree that if I have a fever, cough, feel short of breath, have any other symptoms, have knowingly been exposed to a communicable disease such as COVID-19 I agree not to participate in USMS activities for a minimum of 10 days from the date the symptoms started, until the symptoms have subsided or I have been cleared by a doctor. If I test positive for COVID-19 within 10 days following participation in a USMS activity, I will notify the USMS event director, coach or club administrator immediately.
5. I hereby Release, Waive and Covenant Not to Sue, and further agree to Indemnify, Defend and Hold Harmless the following parties: USMS, its members, clubs, workout groups, event hosts, employees, and volunteers (including, but not limited to, event directors, coaches, officials, judges, timers, safety marshals, lifeguards, and support boat owners and operators); the USMS Swimming Saves Lives Foundation; USMS Local Masters Swimming Committees (LMSCs); the Event organizers and promoters, sponsors and advertisers; pool facility, lake and property owners or operators hosting the Events; law enforcement agencies and other public entities providing support for the Events; and each of their respective parent, subsidiary and affiliated companies, officers, directors, partners, shareholders, members, agents, employees, and volunteers (individually and collectively, the "Released Parties"), with respect to any liability, claim(s), demand(s), cause(s) of action, damage(s), loss or expense (including court costs and reasonable attorneys' fees) of any kind or nature ("Liability") which may arise out of, result from, or relate in any way to my participation in the Events, including claims for Liability caused in whole or in part by the negligent acts or omissions of the Released Parties.
6. I further agree that if, despite this Agreement, I, or anyone on my behalf, makes a claim for Liability against any of the Released Parties, I will indemnify, defend and hold harmless each of the Released Parties from any such Liabilities which any may be incurred as the result of such claim.

I hereby warrant that I am of legal age and competent to enter into this Agreement, that I have read this Agreement carefully, understand its terms and conditions, acknowledge that I will be giving up substantial legal rights by signing it (including the rights of my spouse, children, heirs and next of kin, and any legal and personal representatives, executors, administrators, successors, and assigns), acknowledge that I have signed this Agreement without any inducement, assurance, or guarantee, and intend for my signature to serve as confirmation of my complete and unconditional acceptance of the terms, conditions and provisions of this Agreement. This Agreement represents the complete understanding between the parties regarding these issues and no oral representations, statements, or inducements have been made apart from this Agreement. If any provision of this Agreement is held to be unlawful, void, or for any reason unenforceable, then that provision shall be deemed severable from this Agreement and shall not affect the validity and enforceability of any remaining provisions.

Last Name	First Name	MI	Sex (circle) M      F	Date of Birth (mm/dd/yyyy)
Street Address, City, State, Zip				
Signature of Participant				Date Signed