



Richmond Metro Aquatic League (RMAL) HANDBOOK 2025

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RMAL Executive Board

Position	Name
President	Scott Soukup
Vice President	Todd McDermott
Secretary	Michele Turlington
Treasurer	Adrienne Howlett
Member at Large	Floyd Young
Member at Large	Rob Schorr
Member at Large	David Norman

All members can be reached via the RMAL email address: rmalswim@gmail.com

General Rules

Purpose

The Richmond Metro Aquatic League is an organization of swimmers, coaches, and parents with the goal of teaching children proper swimming techniques and good sportsmanship while fostering competition in a fun atmosphere.

Article I: Administration

1.01 Membership

Membership shall consist of the swimming teams of:

ACAC (AC), Bon Air (BA), Brandermill (BM), Brighton Green (BG), Charter Colony (CC), Granite (GR), Midlothian YMCA (YM), Powhatan YMCA (PW), Greenfield (GF), Settler's Landing (SL), Shenandoah (SH), Stonehenge (ST), Surreywood (SW), Walton Park (WP), Willow Oaks (WO), and Woodlake (WL).

1.02 Sports

RMAL has team competition in swimming. It only provides organizational support for recognized members within the summer swimming program.

1.03 Addition of New Swim Teams

Written application of a new member club to RMAL shall be received no later than the October Governing Board meeting prior to the season that new member club intends to participate. This application will be voted on at the beginning of the October scheduled meeting, and upon admission, the member club may participate in the meeting and be eligible to participate in that season's swim schedule. Teams may be admitted into the league upon a simple majority vote of the Governing Board provided that the applying swim team(s) meets the following requirements or be willing to forgo hosting home meets:

1. a 25-yard or 25-meter pool
2. six or more properly marked lanes and regulation starting blocks.
3. depth of 4' for race start dive-in.

1.04 Combination of Member Swim Teams

To combine member teams on a permanent or situational basis, the following must occur:

1. Proposed combined teams must come to agreement on meet hosting, practices, shared costs, etc. before announcing to the board the intention to merge.
2. Member pools of the planned merger need to notify the Executive Board prior to the Spring meeting with the anticipated duration of the merger to adjust for impacts to schedules and divisions. Executive or Governing Board approval is not necessary for a merger.

1.05 Eligibility

1. Only dues paying members are allowed to swim for an association team. See Rules 5.03 and 5.04 for additional requirements for dues and fees.
2. Swim team representatives must certify in writing prior to the first swim meet of the season that all swimmers are eligible to swim and have current memberships at their respective clubs.
3. In intra-league competition, each swimmer must swim for the team for which he/she has declared and is a member in good standing.
4. If a swimmer belongs to one or more clubs, he/she must declare prior to the first meet which team he/she will compete and must continue to compete only for that team for the remainder of the season, but he/she may practice with either club.
5. For members of the coaching staff of a swim team who desire to swim during competition, the following applies:
 - a. The swimmer must not be a head coach in RMAL.
 - b. The assistant swimming coach must be hired for their coaching ability/prospects. There will be no recruiting of swimmers as coaches to bolster the swim team's performance. Member clubs with any grievance should contact the RMAL Executive Board for potential investigation.
6. Each club must make sure each swimmer is properly registered with the league on the date set for registration.

1.06 Code of Conduct

Any current, former, or prospective RMAL affiliated person may be suspended for a definite or indefinite time period with or without terms of probation or expelled from participating in RMAL events for life if such person violates the provisions of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, set forth in 304.3, or aids, abets, or encourages another person to violate any of the provisions of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct. Review of any situation is subject to the review of the Technical Review Committee defined in 7.32.

Article II: RMAL Organization

2.01 Governing Board

The affairs of the League shall be conducted by a governing board, which shall consist of at least one parent representative or coach from each club, with coaches optionally serving as advisors. Each club shall be entitled to one vote. The Governing Board shall elect an Executive Board consisting of a President, a Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to five Members at Large to serve for a one-year term to oversee the administration of the League. Terms within the same position for more than two consecutive years are allowed provided that the governing board is made aware of the instance and explicitly votes on the extended term.

2.02 Committees

The President and/or governing board shall create ad hoc committees with the President appointing the chairperson of said committee.

2.03 Meetings and Member Representation

The Governing Board will meet regularly on the third Wednesday in March and the third Wednesday in October, with other meetings scheduled as necessary and called by the President or a majority of the Governing Board.

Each member club's RMAL Governing Board Representative must be present at all RMAL meetings.

2.04 Quorum

A quorum shall consist of one more than 50% of the League clubs in addition to a minimum of four executive board members. A majority vote of the clubs present constitutes a league vote.

2.05 Governance

The league operates under the principle of consensus decision-making: a group decision-making process in which group members develop, and agree to support, a decision in the best interest of the whole. A quorum of governing board representatives must be present for any league votes and simple majority of voting members will determine any league votes.

2.06 Amendments

The Governing Board may adopt and amend such additional rules and regulations as it deems expedient, providing a quorum is present and a majority of that quorum are in favor of such changes. All changes must be submitted in writing or via email.

2.07 Job Descriptions

President

1. Preside at Board meetings and meetings of swimming representatives.
2. Oversee financial and other operations.
3. Assure adherence to RMAL rules.
4. Appoint additional committees and chairpersons thereof, as necessary to conduct the duties of the league.
5. Meet with treasurer prior to the October meeting to develop a budget to be submitted to the Board for approval at the Fall meeting.
6. Cannot be a current league coach.

Vice President

1. Responsible for standing and created committees.
2. Meet with committee chairpersons prior to the Fall and Spring meetings in preparation for reporting findings to the General Board to inform League votes
3. Schedule training sessions and coaches' meetings prior to the summer season.
4. Responsible for submitting to the secretary, motions, rule changes, and minutes of meetings of swimming representatives.
5. Decide questions on RMAL or USA Swimming rules.

6. Perform the duties of the President in the absence of the President or in the event the President is unable to serve.

Secretary

1. Record minutes of all RMAL meetings.
2. Notify members of scheduled and called meetings.
3. Keep up-to-date files of minutes/motions/decisions made.
4. Oversee organization, typing, printing, and distribution of RMAL Handbook.
5. Minutes of the previous meeting will be available upon request at least one week prior to the next scheduled meeting and copies will be distributed at the meeting.
6. Perform monthly bank statement reconciliations.

Treasurer

1. Work with the vice-president in preparing the budget.
2. Submit the proposed budget and annual financial report, composed of income and disbursements from all sports, broken down by sports, into Championship and regular season showing appropriate line items explaining where all the monies went.
3. Sign all checks, be responsible for checking/savings accounts, and maintain expense records for each committee.

Members at Large

1. Duties as assigned by the President.

Article III: Competition

3.01 State Competition *(note: RMAL State-level competition does not presently occur.)*

RMAL swimmers may swim for RMAL, provided RMAL is so registered with USA Swimming for that year. If not, they may swim UNATTACHED or attach themselves to any USA Swimming team. Swimmers attached to any USA Swimming team must be unattached for 120 days from the last competition before being able to represent RMAL in State competition.

3.02 League Registration

Each club must make sure each of its swimmers are properly registered with the Executive Board on the dates set for registration (see 5.04).

Article IV: Age Groups and Gender Classification

4.01 Age Groups

Age 6 and under
Age 7-8
Age 9-10
Age 11-12
Age 13-14

Age 15 and over

4.02 Governing Age

Age classification will be determined by the member's **age as of May 31 of the calendar year** with the maximum league age being 18. Out-of-age-group swimming is only permitted in exhibition swims.

Swimmers are eligible to swim only in events within their age group. Special circumstances in relays notwithstanding as addressed in rule 7.14, the only exceptions to this are the 10 and under 100 IM in which Age 7-8 may swim and swim relays in which 6 and under may swim with Age 7-8.

4.03 Gender Identity

Based on guidance from USA Swimming, a minor transgender athlete member of a swim club should be allowed to participate in accordance with his/her/their gender identity, irrespective of the sex listed on the athlete's birth certificate or other records and regardless of whether the athlete has undergone any medical procedure. This means an athlete who is biologically female but identifies as a male should be allowed to participate in male events and an athlete who is biologically male but identifies as female should be allowed to participate in female events. The RMAL President, Vice President, and the Technical Committee Lead must be made aware of any instances where swimmers are swimming in this capacity. Coaches are responsible for notifying the RMAL Vice President prior to the first meet of the season. Swimmers in this capacity must stay registered for the entire season in their expressed gender identity. All questions should be referred to the RMAL Vice President. It is also required that the meet referee be made aware of any swimmers who are swimming based on their gender identity to provide proper officiating of the meet. Swimsuit usage must be in accordance with USA Swimming policy and local laws.

Article V: Fees

5.01 League Fees

The Board shall establish, from time to time, the fees to be paid to the League by member teams and or swimmers. Such fees shall be uniform to all.

5.02 Swimmer Fee due to RMAL

The fee for the summer season shall be determined by the Governing Board at the Spring meeting and payable in full upon joining the team.

5.03 Team Fees

The amount for dues and fees that each member team charges its individual members shall be established by the team, not by RMAL, provided that any such dues and fees shall have broad application to individual members of the team and shall apply equally to all similarly situated individuals.

5.04 Certification of Fees and Membership

Swim team representatives must certify in writing prior to the first swim meet of the season that all swimmers are eligible to swim and have current memberships at their respective clubs. Certification will also confirm roster count and all RMAL non-championship fees have been submitted.

Article VI: Regular Season Meet Schedule

6.01 RMAL Meet Schedule

Regular season meets will be scheduled by the Executive Board and will be approved by the Governing Board.

6.02 Meet Day and Start

Each summer, regular season Intra-League schedules for swimming will be conducted to provide enjoyment and a competitive experience for the swimmers. Swim meets will occur once per week, starting at 6:00 p.m., with warm-ups beginning no later than 5:30 p.m. Any schedule changes must be agreed to by all regular season participating teams and the RMAL Executive Board.

6.03 Determination of Divisions

A panel appointed by the RMAL President will verify the official standings at the end of season and make recommendations as to the placement of teams for the upcoming season.

Swimming Rules

Article VII: Swimming Rules

7.01 Rules

Anything not covered in the RMAL rules will be in accordance with Articles 101, 102, and 105 of USA Swimming Rules and Regulations.

7.02 League Registration

League Registration will end no later than 6:00 PM on the day before the 2nd meet. An electronic roster shall be sent to the RMAL Executive Board within 24 hours. Other registration procedures are subject to revision each year.

7.03 Year-round Swimmers

Registered USA swimming participants and swimmers transferring from another RMAL swim team must provide best times for all pertinent distances swum in each stroke to both the team swim representative and head coach to determine classification before the swimmer can be registered with RMAL.

USA swimming year-round times can be found at www.usaswimming.org.

7.04 Definition of Blue, Gold, Silver

A Blue swimmer is one who has attained a time for a particular event that is as fast or faster than the Blue time listed in the RMAL Time Standards. A Gold swimmer is one who has attained a time for a particular event that is as fast or faster than the Gold time listed in the RMAL Time Standards; but has not attained a time fast enough to qualify for the Blue classification. A Silver swimmer is one who has not attained a time for a particular event that is fast enough to qualify for the Gold or Blue classifications. A swimmer's classification does not change during an RMAL meet based on achieving a time that qualifies for a higher classification; however, at subsequent meets the swimmer shall swim in the faster classification.

Times achieved by year-round swimmers in USA Swimming meets must be considered for classification purposes in accordance with Rules 7.04 and 7.05.

7.05 Swimming Classifications

For each event, swimmers are placed in one of three classifications -- Blue, Gold, or Silver -- based on their fastest applicable time in that event. Blue and Gold qualifying times are revised every four years in accordance with USA Swimming Short Course Motivational Times and are listed on the RMAL website under "Time Standards" within the Library menu. Where available, the A and BB time standards from USA Swimming's Short Course Motivational Times are used, respectively, for the Blue and Gold time standards. The methodology for calculating RMAL Time Standards is explained in Procedures for Determining RMAL Time Standards (7.08).

7.06 Qualifying Times

For the purpose of entry times and to determine classification, all swimmers are required to use the fastest time they have achieved for each event in a 25-yard or 25-meter pool ("Best Time") since May 31 of the calendar year prior to the year in which the meet will be swum.

Example: For meets to be swum in 2025, the swimmer's fastest time after May 31, 2024, shall be used.

A qualifying time must be achieved within RMAL competition in order to qualify for RMAL Championships.

7.07 Conversions: Meters to Yards and Yards to Meters

To change a swimmer's time from **meters to yards**:

$$\text{Yard time} = \text{Meter time} / 1.1$$

All converted times should be rounded to the nearest hundredth of a second.

To change a swimmer's time from **yards to meters**:

$$\text{Meter time} = \text{Yard time} \times 1.1$$

All converted times should be rounded to the nearest hundredth of a second.

7.08 Procedures for Determining RMAL Time Standards

1. Blue and Gold yard standards (both yards and meters) are read directly from the 2024-2028 National Age Group Motivational Times for Short Course Yards tables of "A" and "BB" times, respectively, for the following strokes:
 - a. Age 9-10 - All strokes and IM.
 - b. Age 11-12 - All strokes and IM.
 - c. Age 13-14 – All strokes less the 100 IM
 - d. Age 15 and over – 50-yd and 100-yd Freestyle (from 15-16 age group table)
2. Blue and Gold yard standards for the Age 13-14 and Age 15 and over groups for 50-yard events are calculated from the Table's 100 yard "A" and "BB" time standards for 13 - 14 and 15 - 16 age groups, respectively, using the multiplier 0.47 for Age 13-14 and .46 for Age 15 and over. Times for 13-14 and 15 and over 100-yd IM events are calculated similarly using the 200 IM time.

Example: Age 15 and over girls Gold 50-yard Breaststroke:

USA Swimming "Short Course" "BB" time for 100-yard Breast = 1:19.79

Multiplier = 0.47

$0.47 \times 79.79 \text{ seconds} = 37.501$, rounded to 37.50 seconds

Example Age 13-14 boys Blue 100-yd IM:

USA Swimming "Short Course" "A" time for 200-yd IM = 2:15.39

Multiplier = 0.47

$0.47 \times 135.39 = 63.6333$, rounded to 1:03.63 seconds

3. All meter time standards are calculated from the RMAL yard time standards outlined in 7.07.
4. Qualifying times for all age groups at the Silver classification level for the Championship meet are based on the best times of the previous year. The slower of the times between either the 36th fastest time in the event the previous year or the 8th fastest silver time of the event the previous year shall be used as the Championship qualifying time.
5. Meter qualifying times are based on yard times multiplied by 1.11 and then rounded to the nearest hundredth.
6. Blue, Gold and Championship Qualifying time standards for Age 7-8 are reviewed periodically to ensure appropriate numbers of swimmers in each classification.

7.09 Classification and Entry Times for Age 13-14 and Age 15-18 Who Are Year-Round Swimmers

Certain events swum in RMAL by Age 13-14 and Age 15-18 swimmers are not commonly swum in USA Swimming meets. For these events, a year-round swimmer's USA Swimming time for a particular stroke at the corresponding USA Swimming distance that is closest to the distance of the RMAL event must be considered. The corresponding RMAL and year-round events are listed below:

Applicable Age Group	RMAL Event		USA Swimming Event	
	Distance	Stroke	Distance	Stroke
13-14 and 15 and over	50	Back	100	Back
	50	Fly	100	Fly
	50	Breast	100	Breast
	100	IM	200	IM

If a RMAL Age 13-14 or Age 15-18 swimmer who is a year-round swimmer has achieved an A (Blue) or BB (Gold) time in the age group for which the swimmer will participate within RMAL in any of the events listed above, then that USA Swimming classification shall be used for RMAL purposes. The entry time for a swimmer whose Blue or Gold classification is so determined shall be the minimum qualifying time listed in the RMAL Time Standards for that classification.

Example: An Age 15 and over boy who swims year-round has a best time in RMAL 50-yard backstroke competition of 29.51, which is slower than the Gold qualifying time of 29.46, and therefore would place him in the Silver division. However, he has swum a 1:02.21 in the 100-yard backstroke in a USA Swimming meet, which is faster than the 1:02.69 BB USA Swimming time standards for 15-16 year age group. Because his BB USA classification translates to a Gold RMAL classification and is faster than his classification based on his fastest RMAL time (Silver), the swimmer is classified as Gold, and his entry time is 29.46 -- the RMAL Gold time standard.

7.10 Loss of Blue or Gold Classification

Blue/Gold classification will be lost, and the swimmer reclassified according to his/her current best time in Gold/Silver when one of the following happens:

1. The swimmer's best time from the previous year does not meet the qualifying standard for the current season.
2. The swimmer changes age group and his/her previous Blue/Gold time no longer meets the Blue/Gold time standard in the new age group.
3. If a swimmer did not re-establish a Blue/Gold time during the previous, full RMAL season, for the first meet at which he swims the event in the current year, he will be reclassified based on the best time he achieved the previous year.
4. A year-round swimmer who is classified as Blue or Gold based on a time in a USA Swimming meet in accordance with Rules 7.03 and 7.05 shall not lose the classification so obtained based on the circumstances described in this Rule unless the USA Swimming best time was swum prior to the start of the previous RMAL season.

7.11 Swimming Out of Classification

Any swimmer swimming out of his/her proper classification will be reclassified without penalty and the event will be rescored with the swimmer in the proper classification.

7.12 Heat Order for Regular Season Meets

Heats will be swum fastest to slowest. The Clerk of Course or the Referee may combine any heats necessary to shorten the length of the meet.

7.13 Individual Events for Regular Season Meets

1. There is no limit to the number of swimmers a team may have in any Blue, Gold or Silver event except for the Individual Medley. However, a swimmer may enter no more than three individual events per meet plus a relay. Swimmers must swim in their age group. Any swimmer swimming more than three events shall be disqualified from the additional event(s), the events shall be re-scored, and a twenty-point penalty shall be assessed for each additional event over the 3rd individual event.
2. Individual events are combined Blue, Gold, and Silver events, with each classification being scored separately. For the Individual Medley, the maximum number of entries per team for an IM event is six swimmers/team for a six-lane pool, and eight swimmers/team for an eight-lane pool. A five-point penalty will be assessed for each swimmer who swims more than the designated team entry limit of six for a six-lane pool or eight for an eight-lane pool. Due to pool depth restrictions, Settlers Landing may run multiple heats with four swimmers in each heat for a total of 6 IM swimmers per team. (See section 1.03 relating to pool depth).

7.14 Relay Events for Regular Season Meets

1. Freestyle relays will be swum in competition during the first, third, and fifth meets; medley relays will be swum in the second, fourth, and sixth meets.
2. Relays are mixed gender and will consist of either one boy and three girls, or two boys and two girls. Relays may be swum in any boy/girl order. Swimmers must swim in their age group and are limited to one relay per meet. Any team that has at least one swimmer in an age group but has insufficient swimmers **registered** with RMAL to form at least one relay for that age group may permit swimmers to swim on a relay for the next higher age group in order to permit a relay to swim in that age group. Absences by registered swimmers do not constitute authorization to move a swimmer up an age group. Any swimmer swimming on a relay in an older age group at a particular meet may only swim on a relay in that older age group and shall be classified, for relay purposes, according to the time standards of the older age group. Swimmers must be in their age group for the Championship meet.
3. Insufficient swimmers of an age group notwithstanding, swimmers must compete in the relays of their assigned age group; however, 6 and under swimmers may participate in Age 7-8 relays if a coach decides to include them in a relay team.
4. RMAL has two classifications of relays: silver and gold+
5. Total relay teams per age group are 6 for a 6-lane pool and 8 for an 8-lane pool, with the mix of gold+ and silver to be determined by the head coach.

6. Silver relays must contain only swimmers classified as silver in the stroke they are swimming.
7. Gold+ relay teams must have at least two swimmers qualified as gold or higher in the stroke they will swim in the relay with noted exception below*. Silver swimmers can fill other slots.

*For Freestyle and Medley relays, if the team has only 1 gold+ swimmer, silver swimmers can make up the remainder of the relay team.

8. A team may only create an additional gold+ relay if they have more than 4 gold+ swimmers or if they cannot place more gold+ swimmers on the relay team due to the genders of the swimmers. If the team has more than 4 gold+ swimmers, the relay teams still must be made up of a 2 or more gold+ swimmers.

Example: Team A has 3 gold+ male/0 gold+ female freestylers. League relay rules only allow 2 male swimmers per relay. In this instance, Team A may create a second relay team.

9. For the Freestyle relay and Freestyle leg of the Medley Relay in the Age 13-14 and Age 15 and over, the relay team classification as Gold+ or Silver will depend on the highest classification achieved by the swimmer in the 100 Freestyle or 50 Freestyle events. For example, if Swimmer A has achieved a Silver time in the 50 Free and a Gold time in the 100 Free, the relay must swim as a Gold+ relay.
10. No penalty will be assessed for any relay swimming illegally, the relay will be reclassified, and the event will be re-scored.

7.15 Swimming Entries

1. The Visiting and Home teams must turn their meet entries to the RMAL Executive Board (rmalswim@gmail.com) and exchange with the opposing team by 8PM the day before the scheduled regular season meet. Email addresses for all teams can be found on the RMAL website. The RMAL Executive Board will hold the entries to help ensure fair play. The home team will send their entries to the home team who will seed the meet and distribute heat sheets to the visiting team. Changes to individual events or classification of relays cannot be made after the start of the meet; no swimmer may be added to the meet after the start of the meet.
2. An individual swimmer may not enter more than three individual events plus one relay per meet during the regular season.
3. The changing or addition of a swimmer's individual swim event can only be done with the agreement of both head coaches or designates and the meet referee – relay event teams can continue to be established up until the events take place at the meet.

4. The addition of swimmers until the start of the meet is acceptable providing that they are already on the established roster of the team (see rule 7.02 for deadline for registration) but no reseeding will take place unless agreed upon by both head coaches participating in the meet as well as the meet referee. Valid justification such as prior inability to swim due to schedule or injury should be the only reason for adjusting or adding events after heat sheets have been issued.
5. Visiting teams should bring a back-up copy of entries and rosters to the meet as well as their computer.

7.16 Meet Program for Regular Season Meets (With Event #'s)

1	Age 8 and under 100 Free or Medley*	Relay*
Male		Female
2	Age 10 and under 100 Ind. Medley**	3
4	Age 11-12 100 Ind. Medley **	5
6	Age 13-14 100 Ind. Medley**	7
8	Age 15 and over 100 Ind. Medley **	9
10	Age 6 and under 25 Free	11
12	Age 7-8 25 Free	13
14	Age 9-10 50 Free	15
16	Age 11-12 50 Free	17
18	Age 13-14 50 /100 Free +	19
20	Age 15 and over 50 /100 Free +	21
22	Age 6 and under 25 Back	23
24	Age 7-8 25 Back	25
26	Age 9-10 50 Back	27
28	Age 11-12 50 Back	29
30	Age 13-14 50 Back	31
32	Age 15 and over 50 Back	33
34	Age 7-8 25 Butterfly	35
36	Age 9-10 50 Butterfly	37
38	Age 11-12 50 Butterfly	39
40	Age 13-14 50 Butterfly	41
42	Age 15 and over Butterfly	43
44	Age 7-8 25 Breast	45
46	Age 9-10 50 Breast	47
48	Age 11-12 50 Breast	49
50	Age 13-14 50 Breast	51
52	Age 15 and over 50 Breast	53

54	Age 9-10 Mixed 200 Free or Medley*	Relay*
55	Age 11-12 Mixed 200 Free or Medley*	Relay*
56	Age 13-14 Mixed 200 Free or Medley*	Relay*
57	Age 15 and over Mixed 200 Free or Medley*	Relay*

* 1st, 3rd, and 5th meets have Freestyle relays.

* 2nd, 4th, and 6th meets have Medley Relays - (back, breast, butterfly, free)

** Individual Medley Order: Butterfly, Back, Breast, Free

+ - 1st, 3rd, and 5th meets – Age 13-14 and Age 15-18 swimmers will swim the 50 Free

+ - 2nd, 4th, & 6th meets – Age 13-14 and Age 15-18 swimmers will swim the 100 Free

7.17 Scoring for Regular Season Meets

1. Individual events will be scored 7 - 5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 for each of the Blue, Gold, and Silver classifications. Relay events will be scored 14 - 10 - 8 - 6 - 4 - 2 for Silver and Gold+ classifications. 6 and under events do not count in the scoring.
2. Each meet will produce a team winner or a tie. For the purposes of team standings, each divisional win counts one point, and ties one-half point.

7.18 Results for Regular Season Meets

1. Results (names and times) for the first eight places of each classification and event must be given to the coaches immediately upon completion of the meet events. The total results (all swimmers with times) must be provided to the RMAL Executive Board by 8:00 p.m. on the day following the completion of the meet.
2. The Internet will be used to communicate meet results. Blue and Gold times attained at the meet must be indicated next to the swimmers' time with "B" or "G". Team score, pool length (yards or meters), and date must head the results. Infractions, penalties, and re-scoring will also be noted on the Internet.

7.19 Awards for Regular Season Meets

Awards will be given for the first eight places in each Blue, Gold, and Silver event. Awards for heat winners are strongly encouraged. Awards such as heat ribbons, candy suckers, etc. are some suggestions. A trophy will be awarded to the 1st place team of each division in regular season competition within that division and will be presented at the Championship Meet. Ties in regular season record will be broken, if possible, based on the head-to-head records of all the tied teams. If the ties cannot be broken in this way, then the tied teams shall be declared co-champions of the division.

7.20 Starting Equipment

An electronic starting system and a Public Announcement system will be used.

7.21 Timing Equipment

Each team is responsible for bringing their own stopwatches to home and away meets.

Teams should each bring ten stopwatches to home and away meets for their lane timers.

7.22 Starts

The whistle start procedure specified by USA Swimming Rules shall not be used. Instead, the following procedure shall be used:

1. For backstroke and medley relay events, the starter shall direct the swimmers to step into the pool, upon which the swimmers shall immediately enter the water and without undue delay come to the wall at the starting end of the pool. For all other events, the starter shall direct the swimmers to “Step Up,” upon which the swimmers shall take and maintain their positions on the starting block or platform.
2. The starter shall instruct the swimmers as to the distance and stroke for the race.
3. On the starter’s command “take your mark”, the swimmers shall immediately assume their starting position, in the forward start, with at least one foot at the front of the block. When all swimmers are stationary, the starter shall give the starting signal.
4. When a swimmer does not respond promptly to the command “take your mark”, the starter shall immediately release all swimmers with the command “Stand Up”, upon which the swimmers may stand up or step off the blocks.

7.23 False Starts

1. The “no recall” start procedure specified by USA Swimming Rules shall not be used. Instead, when the starting signal is given and one or more swimmers have obtained an unfair advantage, all swimmers shall be recalled at once by a second signal. If the false start is not recalled and the race is permitted to proceed, no swimmer shall be charged with or disqualified for a false start.
2. Any swimmer starting before the starting signal is given shall be charged with a false start by the starter except for a swimmer who has false started in response to the “Stand Up” command or because of the action or movement of another competitor. A false start may be charged only to the offender. The starter shall indicate the swimmer or swimmers, if any, who are charged with a false start.
3. Any swimmer who is charged with committing or causing two false starts shall be disqualified but not removed from the starting blocks. Any relay whose first swimmer is charged with two false starts shall be disqualified but not removed from the starting blocks.

4. During Age 8 and under relays, a swimmer who enters the water upon the start signal at the opposite end from the starting end and who immediately gets out of the pool at the same end, without interfering with any swimmer, shall not be disqualified.

7.24 Electronic Timing System

An electronic timing system will be used to time each event. The host team will decide if sweep judges will be used in case the timing system cannot be used to complete the meet.

7.25 Officials

For regular season meets, home teams are responsible for providing a qualified referee, starter, and two strokes and turns officials throughout each meet, and visiting teams are responsible for providing two qualified strokes and turns officials throughout the meet. Anyone working at an RMAL swim meet as strokes and turns official, starter, or referee must attend a league-approved training clinic for that position at the beginning of the season or must be certified as a USA Swimming official. Once an official has attended the clinic, their name will be added to the official RMAL list of qualified officials. USA Swimming certified officials may request the Vice President to add their names to the list. This list will then be given to all teams for verification of officials at each meet. If a team does not have enough officials to staff a meet, the team may ask the opponent to provide additional officials, providing the opposing team can provide the additional officials.

Notes:

1. Disqualification cards that contain errors must be checked by the referee by consulting with the official who wrote the card. If the error cannot be corrected with certainty, the card must be torn up and the disqualification disallowed.
2. If an official fails to raise his hand when making a disqualification (except for false starts and when dual confirmation is used on relay takeoffs), there shall be no disqualification.

7.26 Postponement and Cancellation

1. The referee, in consultation with the head coaches and parent representatives, shall determine whether it is necessary to cancel or postpone to a future date any competition that cannot be conducted or completed in a satisfactory manner and in fairness to the swimmers. Every effort must be made to reschedule a meet so that it can be continued at a future time. Meets shall only be cancelled by mutual agreement of team head coaches and parent representatives or with the approval of the RMAL Vice President. If postponed, the meet must be swum on the next mutually agreeable day prior to the next regularly scheduled meet for either club, unless otherwise approved by the RMAL Vice President. If a meet is postponed, all completed events shall be counted and the meet resumed at the start of the first event not fully completed. If a meet must be cancelled, the final score will be based on the results of all events that had been completed prior to cancellation. If a meet has not been started by 7:30 PM, the meet may be rescheduled for the next available weekday. If a meet has been delayed two nights in a row due to weather, the meet will be considered complete if it is through the backstroke events. Meets

that have not met the backstroke threshold will be referred the RMAL Vice President for a ruling on if the meet needs to be completed.

2. Already registered RMAL swimmers may be added to the postponed meet, and previously entered swimmers for that meet may change entered events (but only for the number of events that they have left; if they scratched, no-showed, or disqualified in an event, that event still counts as one of the three). Valid justification such as inability to swim due to schedule or injury should be the only reason for adjusting events. Any reseeding requires the approval of both head coaches or designates and the meet referee. As stated in rule 7.15, all individual event changes must be made before the event begins. Relay event teams can continue to be established up until the events take place at the meet.
3. Should the meet be cancelled and not resumed, swimmers' times will stay and be reported to the league, but the scores will not.
4. Any disputes should be passed to the RMAL Vice President or his appointed representative.

7.27 Safety Guidelines

Any safety concern that cannot be addressed prior to the meet time must result in a meet postponement. This will cause no penalty to either team.

Richmond Metropolitan Aquatic League Safety Guidelines

1. The Safety Committee of the Richmond Metro Aquatic League shall consist of the RMAL Vice President or designate, and the Meet Referees of the member swim clubs.
2. In the event of an accident at a swim meet:
 - a. The host club Meet Referee shall investigate the accident as soon as possible.
 - b. The investigating Meet Referee should notify, as soon as possible, the President.
3. A full complement First Aid kit should be provided by the host club of a swim meet. The kit should be kept on deck during the meet.
4. Warm-ups are not permitted to start until a coach is present.
5. The host meet referee shall appoint someone as a safety marshal during warm-ups of both the host and visiting teams. The safety marshal shall ensure that correct warm-up procedures are followed.
6. Coaches should be stationed at the starting end of the pool and shall be responsible for their swimmers' conduct during warm-up.
7. All swimmers must start warm-up procedures at the starting end of the pool.
8. There will be NO DIVING OR RACING STARTS from the blocks or end of the pool during general warm-ups.
9. The coach conducting warm-up may designate a portion of warm-up for "take off". A racing start will be permitted only for one-way swimming where the swimmer exits at the turn end of the pool.

10. Backstroke swimmers must be allowed to complete their start and clear the area before the next swimmer steps onto the blocks.
11. There will be no running, at any time, during the swim meet or warm-ups.
12. Glass containers will not be allowed at the swim meets.
13. There will be no use of profanity on deck/pool.
14. There will be no use of alcohol/drugs/tobacco products during practice/swim meets on deck/pool.
15. Coaches have the right to remove their respective teams from the pool for safety reasons.
16. At least one member of each member club's coaching staff must be certified by the American Red Cross in the areas of First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR). It is recommended that the certified member of the coaching staff be present at all swim practices of their club.
17. Safety is an important factor for our league. Anyone seeing an unsafe condition or activity around the meet venue should stop the activity immediately and report this to the Host Meet Referee.
18. It is recommended that each coach review safety awareness with all team members.
19. Suggested guidelines for a safe meet include filling the pool to capacity prior to hosting a meet. No one, especially young children, should be in the pool during the meet, except the swimmers.

Weather Safety

1. If, during a swim meet, inclement weather occurs, the Referee and coaches shall suspend the swim meet and move all participants and spectators as far as possible from the pool area. If the swim meet is suspended due to inclement weather, the Referee shall wait a minimum of 30 minutes for no weather-related activity before allowing the meet to commence. The host team's safety policies will prevail in cases where their standards are more stringent than RMAL's minimum safety standards. (See paragraph 7.26, for postponement procedures if necessary).
2. Postponement for heat related issues should be handled as if inclement weather is in the area. As in weather safety rule #1, host team's safety policies will prevail in cases where their standards are more stringent than RMAL's minimum safety standards. (See paragraph 7.26, for postponement procedures if necessary).

7.28 Computer Records

All meet results are to be recorded on the program designed for RMAL through any medium agreed to by the two teams. For regular season meets, the home team will record the results for the visiting team at the end of the meet and shall submit the results of the meet to the RMAL Executive Board by 8:00 p.m. the evening following the meet.

Roster files must be provided at each swim meet. Championship registration will also be done by supplying a roster file to the person in charge of the championship heat file.

7.29 League Records

If a league record is broken, the head coach for the team that broke the record is responsible for getting the timers sheet with the record time and, if an electronic timing

system is used, the timing sheet for that heat to the Executive Board as soon after the completion of the meet as possible so the records can be updated by the league.

A current listing of league records shall be maintained on the league's website by the Executive Board.

7.30 Scoring Errors

Scoring errors or changes that are to be made must be called to the attention of the Vice President within 72 hours of the posting of the meet results to the RMAL website. This shall be consistent up to the Championship meet. Collective scores, therefore, will be final and conclusive before the start of the following meet and/or Championships. Any requested changes beyond this deadline will not be accepted.

7.31 Protests

Protests shall be defined as, a written complaint about a decision made at a meet, after all efforts have been made to resolve the situation. All protests must be submitted, in writing, to the meet referee as soon as possible, but no later than 72 hours after the posting of the results to the RMAL website. If the referee is unavailable, then it shall be reported to the RMAL Vice President or his designate. Decisions of the meet referee, the Vice President, or his designate may be appealed to the Technical Review Committee by submitting the appeal to Vice President or his designate within 24 hours of the referee's ruling. A ruling on a protest should be issued within 7 days after the meet in question.

7.32 Technical Review Committee (TRC)

The TRC shall be composed at a minimum of the Vice President or his/her designee, two head coaches selected by the President or his/her designee, and two RMAL Certified Referees also selected by the President or his designee. They should meet within 48 hours of notification of an appeal and report their decision within 48 hours in writing to all parties involved and the RMAL Secretary. Coaches or their designees will present their cases to the TRC and then will be excused from the meeting and contacted by the Vice President or his/her designee with the decision. The Vice President is the non-voting Chairman. Ties will result in the original ruling standing. Results from the TRC will be released with final scores announced to league members.

7.33 Minimum Officials and Equipment for Meets

The meet referee is responsible for fair and equitable judging of the meet. Minimal deck staffing is at the discretion of the referee and based on US Swimming guidelines.

Officials

1. Meet Director (Host)
2. Referee (Host)
3. Head Timer (Host)
4. Two Timers from opposing teams and a Recorder per lane (½ Host and ½ Visiting)
5. Clerk of Course and Assistant (Host)
6. Starter (Host)
7. Strokes & Turns Judges (2 per Host/Visiting T
8. Announcer (Host)
9. Two Computer Operators (Host)
10. Four Runners (Host)

Equipment

1. Starting Blocks
2. Lane Markers
3. Electronic Starting System
4. Dolphin Timing System
5. USA Swimming & RMAL Handbooks
6. P.A. System or Bull Horn
7. Two Stopwatches per lane
8. Tables and Chairs
9. Computer and Printer
10. Printer Paper
11. Backstroke Flags
12. Ribbon Labels (Avery #4144)
13. Heat Sheets for Officials, Judges, and Computer Operators
14. Pencils and Sharpener

The host team should notify the other team as to the number and types of workers needed by the Friday before the meet.

It is helpful if copies of the meet program are given to all officials.

Each team must provide its own stopwatches. The Host Team is responsible for all other supplies. If the Host Team is running low on supplies, the Host Team may call the Visiting Team Representative and ask them to bring any needed supplies.

Note: The Visiting Team is NO LONGER responsible for opening its pool to the Hosting Team Pool members on the day of the meet.

7.34 Meet Results

The Hosting Computer Representative shall ensure the Meet Manager backup file (if possible, this should be sent within 2 hours of the close of the meet; preferably from the pool if there is internet access) are sent to rmalswim@gmail.com within 24 hours of the close of the meet:

The Hosting Computer Representative shall provide the following to the visiting club(s) at the end of the meet:

1. Meet Manager backup file
2. A printed copy of the meet cover sheet (if requested)
3. A printed Meet Summary Report (if requested)

The home club must keep all Lane/Timer Sheets and a final score sheet (by division) signed by the Referee until the RMAL Governing Board's meeting in October.

Swimming Championship Rules

Article VIII: Swimming Championship Rules

8.01 Eligibility

The Championship meet will include all RMAL clubs. A swimmer must have swum as a registered swimmer in at least two RMAL regular season meets, to be eligible to compete in that year's Championship meet. A swimmer entered in any individual event at the Championship meet must have swum the stroke he will swim as a registered swimmer in an individual event at an RMAL meet at least one time during the current league season. A swimmer entered in any relay event at the Championship meet must have swum the stroke he will swim as a registered swimmer in an individual or relay event at an RMAL meet at least one time during the current league season. Silver qualifying times for the Championship meet must be achieved at an RMAL Championship meet or an RMAL regular season meet held since May 31 of the prior calendar year in which the Championship meet is being held.

Exceptions to the two-meet rule can be made for exceptional circumstances by submitting a letter explaining the circumstances signed by the swimmer, parent, and coach to the Executive Board for approval.

8.02 Individual Events

A swimmer may enter a maximum of three individual events. All Blue and Gold swimmers are eligible to swim in Blue and Gold events in which they have been designated during the season, swam at least once, and have met at least a Silver qualifying time within the last two years in an RMAL meet. Each club may enter as many Silver swimmers as attain qualification times (to be established each year) for that event, or if a team does not have any qualifying Silver swimmer, then the team may enter one non-qualifying Silver swimmer per event. The Executive Board reserves the right to invite swimmers to Championships who have not qualified but represent the next fastest times in the league that season.

8.03 Relay Events

1. Each club may enter a total of six relays in each event. It is at the discretion of the coach as to how many relays are **Blue**, **Gold**, or **Silver**. The requirements for the composition of **Blue**, **Gold**, and **Silver** relays are different than the Gold+ & Silver classifications for the regular season meets.
2. **Blue** relays must have at least one swimmer who is **Blue** in the stroke he/she swims and must have another swimmer who is either **Blue** or **Gold** in the stroke he/she swims. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, if a team has only one swimmer in an age group who is **Blue** in any stroke to be swum in the relay and has no swimmers who are **Gold** in any stroke to be swum in the relay, then the **Blue** relay may be composed of one **Blue** swimmer and three **Silver** swimmers. **Gold** relays must have at least one swimmer who is **Gold** in the stroke he/she swims and cannot include any swimmer who is **Blue** in the stroke he/she swims.

Silver relays may not have any swimmer who is **Blue** or **Gold** in the stroke he/she swims.

3. For the Freestyle relay and the Freestyle leg of the medley relay, the relay's classification as **Blue**, **Gold**, or **Silver** will depend on the highest classification achieved by the swimmer in the 100 Freestyle or 50 Freestyle events. For example, if Swimmer A has achieved a **Gold** time in the 50 Free and a **Blue** time in the 100 Free, the relay must swim as a **Blue** relay.
4. No penalty will be assessed for any relay swimming out of classification. The relay will be reclassified, and the event will be re-scored.
5. All teams must use the designated colored relay cards, blue cards for **Blue** relays, yellow cards for **Gold** relays, white cards for **Silver** relays, provided by the league, for the relay entries.
6. Each child on the relay must have swum in at least two meets during the regular season. Each relay must have at least one swimmer who is swimming in at least one individual event at Championships.
7. Deck substitutions are permitted to relays providing there is no change to the classification of the relay. There will be no reseeding or a changed relay.

8.04 Qualified Entries

Entries must be submitted by the established deadline but may be changed according to Section 8.05. If an entry error is discovered prior to an athlete performing the affected event, the error will be corrected without penalty, and the athlete will be allowed to perform the event.

In the event a swimmer participates in any event at Championships for which he is not eligible or swims in the improper classification, he will be reclassified, and the event will be rescored with the swimmer in the proper classification.

8.05 Substitutes and Scratches

If a team has no Silver swimmer entered in an event who has met the Qualifying Time for Championships but has entered a Silver swimmer with a non-qualifying time in accordance with rule 8.02, then another non-qualifying Silver swimmer may be substituted for the swimmer who was entered, provided that substitution is made known to the referee prior to the start of the day's session of the meet. Substitutions for relays can be made provided the substitution does not change the classification of the relay. Scratches may occur at any time, without penalty, but known scratches should be reported prior to the meet to facilitate Clerk of Course duties.

8.06 Events

Events will be the same as regular season meets except the inclusion of both freestyle and medley relays and 50 and 100 yd freestyle events for Age 13-14 and Age 15 and over. The medley relay will be included as the first event and the free relay as the last

event. Entry forms, fees, and such other materials as may be required by the meet director or RMAL Vice President must be submitted to the director prior to the deadline set each year.

8.07 Scoring

Individual events will be scored 9-7-6-5-4-3-2-1 for each of the Blue, Gold, and Silver classifications. Relay events shall be scored 18-14-12-10-8-6-4-2 for each of the Gold+ and Silver classifications.

8.08 Awards

Individual Awards: Medals for 1st through 3rd place in each classification; Ribbons for 4th through 8th place in each classification. Team awards: Trophies for 1st place for the highest scoring team from each of the A, B, C, and D divisions.

8.09 Fees

The swimmer fee for the championship meet will be determined by the Governing Board at the Spring meeting.

8.10 Protests at Championships

Protests at Championships will be handled in the same manner a regular season meets.