

# Briefing Note for Swim Ireland Competitions

## July 2016



This briefing note aims to explain the requirements for people assisting, working and volunteering in various positions of responsibility at Swim Ireland competitions.

Within both Irish legislation, i.e. the *National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016*, and Northern Irish legislation, i.e. the *Police Act 1997 (Part V)*, it is a legal requirement for persons involved in relevant work or activity with young people to be vetted before taking up their position. This type of work involves some of the roles required at competitions. It is the responsibility of the attending Club to check the roles are vetted prior to the competition.

### Swim Ireland Coaches and Team Managers (including Chaperones)

Swim Ireland Coaches and Team Managers must, legally, be vetted for their position due to the nature of their role. So a Coach or Team Manager attending a competition should have a current accepted vetting status. This also applies to individuals appointed on a temporary basis e.g. someone appointed as a Chaperone. Sport science staff are required to be vetted in the same way as Coaches and Team Managers/Chaperones.

### Visiting Coaches and Team Staff

Visiting Coaches and Team Staff are required to submit:

1. Proof of membership of FINA registered national federation
2. Attendance at a child protection/safeguarding course approved by the same national federation (within the last four years)
3. Verification/copy of a vetting or police check (or equivalent) having been undertaken within three (3) years of the prospective event being attended. The vetting or police check (or equivalent) process must be as accepted by their home federation\*

Note\*

In the absence of any vetting process being available in the home federation, a letter of good standing from their national federation will be required. The letter of good standing must be dated within the last 3 months, taken from the start date of the Swim Ireland competition.

Required documentation will need to be received by Swim Ireland at time of receiving entries. Entries may be refused if teams cannot provide acceptable team staff for the competition. The Swim Ireland Competitions Officer will liaise with the National Children's Officer to ensure that the documents submitted are acceptable.

### Officials

Trained and/or licensed Officials (with the exception of timekeepers) are required to be vetted before taking up their position. These positions include (but not limited to):

- Meet Director
- Referee
- Licensed Judge (Turn, Stroke and Start)
- Call Steward

A Call Steward is not a role that requires training or a qualification; however in order to meet the requirements of the legislation Call Stewards *who are appointed* will need to be vetted prior to the competition. Clubs must take this into account when selecting individuals to help

out at competitions. We suggest that Clubs ensure they always have a panel of people who can be *appointed* to such roles. This does not mean vetting every parent.

#### Ad-hoc or extraordinary situations

Where individuals are called or appointed to carry out positions on an ad hoc basis to cover an extraordinary situation where a gap exists that would affect the safety and well-being of the young people involved, common sense should prevail. An appointment on an ad hoc basis may exempt an individual from the legal requirement for vetting – however this must be always viewed with the welfare and safety of young people as paramount. Advice should be sought from the National Children's Officer.

#### Issuing of accreditation for Swim Ireland competitions

Accreditation will only be issued to persons that meet the legal requirements for vetting. Clubs are responsible for ensuring the persons they appoint for positions at a competition have a current accepted vetting status. Accreditation is required for entering certain restricted areas of the meet and no exceptions will be made.

#### Responsibility for safeguarding young people

All attendees and participants at a competition have a responsibility to ensure athletes are able to compete in a safe environment. Any concern about an unauthorised individual being present in a restricted area should be reported to the Meet Director or Referee.

#### Vetting information

National Vetting Bureau and Access NI information and application forms for the vetting process in Ireland and Northern Ireland can be found here:

<http://www.swimireland.ie/safeguarding-children/policies/vetting/>

END

National Children's Officer

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