

Briefing Note: People attending Swim Ireland competitions (January 2019)

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

The *National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012-2016*, and the *Police Act 1997 (Part V)* require persons involved with young people in relevant work/activity or in regulated activity to be vetted before taking up their position. Some roles working at Club, Regional and National competitions fall within this scope and therefore any person in these positions must have the required credentials.

It is the responsibility of a Club or Region to check their members meet the requirements prior to attending a competition.

Swim Ireland Coaches and Team Managers (including Chaperones)

Swim Ireland Coaches and Team Managers must be vetted and hold an accepted safeguarding training certificate for their position due to the nature of their role. A Coach or Team Manager attending a competition should have a current accepted vetting and safeguarding training credential on their profile. This also applies to individuals appointed on a temporary basis e.g. someone appointed as a Chaperone. Sport science staff regularly working in a Region or Club must meet the same requirements 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 a FINA registered national federation
2. Attendance at a child protection/safeguarding course within the last four (4) years of the prospective event being attended. This must be approved by the same national federation as above.
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 the same national federation as above*

Note*

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

Required documentation must 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 (except for timekeepers) are required to be vetted and have attended safeguarding training 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 a role that does not require a specialised qualification; however, in order to meet the legal requirements, 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 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 upon 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 always 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 and safeguarding training. Clubs are responsible for ensuring the persons they appoint for positions at a competition have the current accepted credentials as members of Swim Ireland. 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 unauthorised individual present in a restricted area should be reported immediately to the Meet Director or Referee. Safeguarding concerns about any other individual’s behaviour or actions whilst attending a Swim Ireland competition should also be reported immediately to the Meet Director or Referee.

Further Information

Vetting - 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/>

Safeguarding training – the policy and requirements for training can be found here:

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National Children’s Officer

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