

Florida LMSC Sanctions & Top 10 Report

Anna Lea Matysek, July 17, 2026

New USMS Sanction Software

USMS launched a new sanction system on March 9. As I wrote in my April report, our meet directors had various issues with the new software that required assistance from USMS. There are fewer meets that are held in the Florida LMSC in the summer and fall, but those who have recently applied for sanctions have had issues. I have been modifying the instructions I send to meet directors based on the types of problems they have experienced and hope that will help.

Meets in the Florida LMSC for 2026

The Long Center pool in Clearwater has been undergoing a major renovation. I have checked with their management but they have still not been able to give me a date for when they might be able to host a Masters meet.

The Southeast Zone website (<http://southeastzone.org>) contains a list of all meets scheduled in our zone as they become available. Below is a list of all of the USMS-sanctioned or USMS-recognized meets scheduled so far in the Florida LMSC in 2026.

Date	Event Title	Course	Sanction Type
January 30-February 1, 2026	Rowdy Gaines Classic, Orlando 416 participants (414 USMS member, 2 foreigner)	SCM	Sanction
February 7, 2026	SwimRise Masters Invite, Jacksonville 146 participants (all USMS member, majority were College Club swimmers)	SCY	Sanction
February 7, 2026	Gulf Coast Senior Games, Sarasota 53 participants (41 USMS member, 12 nonmember)	SCY	Recognition
March 21-22, 2026	Bob Beach Championship Meet, St. Pete 103 participants (all USMS member)	SCY	Sanction
April 3-4, 2026	USMS Open Water National Championships (1-Mile and 5K), Sarasota 229 participants (all USMS member) (Note: Held in conjunction with the USA Swimming national open water championships)	OW	Sanction
April 12, 2026	6th Annual Show Your SWAG Meet, Gainesville 75 participants (all USMS member)	SCY	Sanction
April 16-19, 2026	YMCA National Masters Meet, Sarasota 378 participants (335 USMS member, 43 nonmember)	SCY	Sanction
April 18-19, 2026	The Villages Senior Games 110 participants (49 USMS member, 61 nonmember)	SCY	Recognition
June 20-21, 2026	Bumpy Jones Classic, Sarasota 114 participants (all USMS member)	LCM	Sanction
July 11-12, 2026	St. Pete Masters LCM Championships, St. Pete 73 participants (71 USMS member, 2 foreigner)	LCM	Will be sanctioned
September 13, 2026	Gainesville Senior Games, Gainesville	SCY	Recognition

September 19, 2026	2026 Rob Curry Pancake Pentathlon, Clermont	SCY	Sanction
October 18, 2026	4 th Annual SWAGtoberfest, Gainesville	SCY	Sanction
November 7-8, 2026	Shark Tank Meet, Sarasota	SCM	Will be sanctioned

Florida LMSC Meet Stipend Policy

A new meet stipend policy is in effect for 2026 meets. This policy was proposed and approved at the 2025 Florida LMSC Annual Meeting. Upon successful completion of a sanctioned meet, the LMSC will send a stipend to the meet host to cover the costs of financial gifts for the officials, assist with the costs of online meet entry, and any other meet expenses. Details of the policy are posted [in this document on the Florida LMSC website](#) and I am directing meet hosts to that document prior to approving their sanctions.

Immediate USMS Rules Changes

World Aquatics (AQUA) and USA Swimming (USA-S) have updated their respective competitive regulations for the finish rules of butterfly, backstroke, and freestyle. Swimmers are now permitted to be fully submerged once their heads have passed the final 5-meter or 5-yard mark immediately prior to reaching the finish.

The memo issued by the chair of the USMS Rules Committee on this topic is attached in the following pages of this report.

Continued on next page.....

From: Rules Committee Chair

Sent: July 14, 2026

To: Officials Committee members, LMSC Officials Chairs

CC: LMSC Chairs and Vice Chairs

Subject: Changes to finish rules for butterfly, backstroke, and freestyle

This email is sent on behalf of the USMS Rules Committee.

World Aquatics (AQUA) and USA Swimming (USA-S) have updated their respective competitive regulations for the finish rules of butterfly, backstroke, and freestyle. Swimmers are now permitted to be fully submerged once their heads have passed the final 5-meter or 5-yard mark immediately prior to reaching the finish.

The modification to the wording for each article within the U.S. Masters Swimming Code of Regulations and Rules of Competition (rule book) can be seen below:

Article 101.3 Butterfly

101.3.5 **Finish**—At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. Once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the final 5-meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5-yard mark (short course yards), immediately prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged.

Article 101.4 Backstroke

101.4.2 **Stroke**—Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes above the lip of the gutter, or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter immediately after the start is not permitted. The swimmer shall push off on the back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water. ~~Once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the final 5-meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5-yard mark (short course yards) immediately prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged prior to the touch.~~

101.4.4 **Finish**—Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the final 5-meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5-yard mark (short course yards) immediately

prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged prior to the touch.

Article 101.5 Freestyle

101.5.4 **Finish**—The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of the swimmer touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance. Once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the final 5-meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5-yard mark (short course yards), immediately prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged.

The language below is the final wording in force as of the date of this memo. All swim meets from this point forward shall be officiated using this updated language.

Article 101.3 Butterfly

101.3.5 **Finish**—At the finish, the body shall be on the breast and the touch shall be made with both hands separated and simultaneously at, above, or below the water surface. Once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the final 5-meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5-yard mark (short course yards), immediately prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged.

Article 101.4 Backstroke

101.4.2 **Stroke**—Standing in or on the gutter, placing the toes above the lip of the gutter, or bending the toes over the lip of the gutter immediately after the start is not permitted. The swimmer shall push off on the back and continue swimming on the back throughout the race. Some part of the swimmer must break the surface of the water throughout the race, except it shall be permissible for the swimmer to be completely submerged during the turn and for a distance of not more than 15 meters (16.4 yards) after the start and each turn. By that point, the head must have broken the surface of the water.

101.4.4 **Finish**—Upon the finish of the race, the swimmer must touch the wall while on the back. Once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the final 5-meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5-yard mark (short course yards) immediately prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged prior to the touch.

Article 101.5 Freestyle

101.5.4 **Finish**—The swimmer shall have finished the race when any part of the swimmer touches the wall after completing the prescribed distance. Additionally, once some part of the head of the swimmer has passed the final 5-meter mark (long course and short course meters) or 5-yard mark (short course yards), immediately prior to reaching for the finish, the swimmer may be completely submerged.

This modified language will be updated in the online version of the rule book as soon as practicable. The printed rule book will be updated with publication of the 2027 edition of the rule book.

Mollie Grover
USMS Rules Committee
Chair July 14, 2026