



2026 CLUB EXCELLENCE PROGRAM INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

Club Excellence Program Recognition Levels

Clubs may qualify for one of three levels of recognition:

1. Gold
 - The top 20 point-scoring USA Swimming member clubs in 2026; and
 - A minimum of one 18 & Under athlete from the club must achieve a Gold time standard.
 - All clubs with a 2025 World Championships team 18 & Under qualifying athlete for Team USA.
2. Silver
 - USA Swimming member clubs who do not achieve Gold status and rank in the top 21-100 point scores in 2026.
 - At least one 18 & Under athlete registered with the club must achieve the Silver time standard.
3. Bronze
 - USA Swimming member clubs who do not achieve Gold or Silver status and rank in the top 101-200 point scores in 2026.
 - At least one 18 & Under athlete registered with the club must achieve the Bronze time standard.
4. Podium Club
 - Any club achieving the Gold Medal level for a fourth consecutive year will earn additional recognition by being named to the Podium Club.

Club Excellence funding will be calculated from the final Club Excellence Scores.

Club Eligibility Requirements

For the 2026 Club Excellence season only, there are no Club Recognition Program and Safe Sport Recognition Program requirements.

Athlete Eligibility Requirements

1. Athletes must be USA Swimming members at the time of all performances to be included in point scoring.
2. Athletes must be 18 years old or younger at the time of all performances to be included in point scoring.
3. Athletes must be U.S. citizens who are eligible to represent the USA in international competition(s).
4. Article 203.3 (60-day rule) applies. Only times swum while an athlete legally represented a team in competition will be included. Any time swum while an athlete was unattached will not be eligible for consideration.
5. An athlete's times are not eligible if the athlete trained or competed with a collegiate program (e.g., NCAA, NJCAA or NAIA) prior to August 31, 2025. Performances from athletes who have not begun their freshman year in college (e.g., high school seniors who graduated from high school in May/June 2025 and started college in August/September 2025) are eligible to represent their clubs in the Club Excellence program.
6. All clubs awarded recognition in the 2026 Club Excellence program must have at least one 18 & Under athlete who achieves the time standard in the level at which the club is recognized.
7. All performances must be achieved between September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025 be LCM times (unless open water achievement is considered per the below) and must be verifiable within the USA Swimming Times database.

Time Standards for 2026 CE Program (Long Course Meters ONLY)

WOMEN			2025	MEN		
Gold	Silver	Bronze		Bronze	Silver	Gold
25.51	25.89	26.59	50 Free	23.79	22.89	22.63
55.39	56.29	57.69	100 Free	51.99	50.09	49.52
2:00.32	2:02.29	2:04.99	200 Free	1:54.09	1:50.79	1:49.65
4:15.05	4:19.49	4:23.59	400 Free	4:02.49	3:57.69	3:54.93
8:47.09	8:50.79	9:06.79	800 Free	8:23.09	8:11.09	8:11.09
16:49.19	17:00.19	17:26.79	1500 Free	16:05.09	15:44.69	15:42.58
1:01.76	1:02.69	1:04.29	100 Back	58.19	56.19	55.62
2:13.98	2:15.89	2:19.29	200 Back	2:06.99	2:03.29	2:02.10
1:09.70	1:10.99	1:13.29	100 Breast	1:05.19	1:02.69	1:02.16
2:30.54	2:34.19	2:38.59	200 Breast	2:22.59	2:17.39	2:15.50
59.69	1:00.79	1:02.49	100 Fly	55.89	53.99	53.54
2:13.40	2:16.49	2:18.39	200 Fly	2:05.09	2:01.69	2:00.42
2:15.91	2:17.99	2:21.29	200 IM	2:07.99	2:04.19	2:03.05
4:49.92	4:54.69	5:00.29	400 IM	4:33.09	4:26.89	4:25.25

- In the event that the Gold Medal and Silver Medal standards are the same, only Bronze and Gold points will be calculated for the event
 - The Bronze Time Standard is equal to the 2025 LCM Speedo Summer Championships 18 & Under Standards.
 - The Silver Time Standard is equal to the 2025 TYR Summer Championships 19 & Over Standards.
 - The Gold Time Standard is equal to:
 - Women: 150th ranked swimmer in the world from the prior year (9/1/2023 through 8/31/2024) – not allowed to be slower than 2025 Club Excellence Gold Standards
 - Men: 200th ranked swimmer in the world from the prior year (9/1/2023 through 8/31/2024) – not allowed to be slower than 2025 Club Excellence Gold Standards
8. New Open Water Requirements:
- Gold Medal Open Water – World Champ Team members and Open Water National Team members. 1750 points per Open Water event on the National Team
 - Silver Medal Open Water – National Junior Team members. 1300 points per Open Water event on the National Junior Team.
 - Bronze Medal Open Water – Top 5 18 & Under at Open Water Nationals 10K, Top 5 in 7.5K at Junior Nationals. Top 3 in 5K Juniors. These swims will generate 800 Club Excellence points.

	10K Nationals	5K Nationals	7.5K Juniors	5K Juniors
Gold	Top 6	Top 2		
Silver	Top 3 (18&U)		Top 2	
Bronze	Top 5 (18&U)		Top 5	Top 3

Performance Scoring Information

- Performance scoring for Club Excellence will be an automated process and therefore will not require an application. Each team's total score will include all qualifying athletes who are registered to that specific USA Swimming member club on the date of the swim.
- Only an athlete's four highest scoring events (which equal or better these standards) will count toward the USA Swimming member club point score using the World Aquatics Points Table, a power point rating system that assigns point values to swimming performances. Open Water events will count towards an athlete's four scoring events.
- World Record swims in the individual events listed in the time standard chart will be rewarded with an additional 1,000 points per world record.
- To be eligible to score points, athletes must achieve a Gold, Silver or Bronze standard as shown in the chart above. Points for Gold level swims will be multiplied by a factor of 2.0; points for Silver level swims will be increased by a factor of 1.5. All performances must be long course meters; no

conversions accepted.

5. Clubs will have access to Club Excellence Detail reports within SWIMS throughout the entire summer. Please verify that there is no missing/incorrect information. No adjustments will be made to any score after the announcement.

Rules for Promoting Club Excellence Achievements

Medal recognition and status is for one year only and in 2026, status will go through December 31, 2026. The Club Excellence program is designed to be a competitive contest between USA Swimming member clubs whereby teams earn (and re-earn) their ranking each year. Every year produces a different group of clubs that earn exclusive benefits. To protect the integrity of this competition, it is important clubs follow the stated promotional guidelines and annually update its website with the logo earned that calendar year.

- Recognition includes either a vinyl 48' x 72' team banner or a 7" x 9" plaque, and a results announcement on USA Swimming's official website and social media platform(s).
- USA Swimming member clubs may use the USA Swimming Gold, Silver, or Bronze Medal Club designation and logo through December 31 of the program year. It may also be displayed on the USA Swimming member club's website, social media, club advertising and promotional materials, team letterhead as well as team apparel.
- After the status expires, USA Swimming member clubs may make ongoing use of vinyl team banner(s) or plaque(s) and Club Excellence logo(s) on its respective club webpage or rotating banner specifically featuring current and past team accomplishments. All use of the Club Excellence logo must reflect the relevant year and recognition level (Gold, Silver or Bronze) in accordance with these rules.
- By receiving Club Excellence recognition, the club acknowledges these rules and agrees to abide by them. Failure to comply could impact the USA Swimming member club's future eligibility to participate in the program.

Anti-Doping Provision

All clubs, coaches, swimmers and their related performances shall be eligible for consideration under the applicable and relevant rules of USA Swimming, the USOPC, World Aquatics, USADA and WADA (see Article 303). This requirement is acknowledged without reservation and unequivocally upon submission of the application for the Club Excellence Program.

If, subsequent to submitting the application, a swimmer ceases to be eligible to compete for violations of Article 303, that swimmer and their related performances shall be disqualified from the program and the application shall be reviewed by USA Swimming for possible additional action. Such action may include, but not limited to, recalculation of results, return of awards, return of grant dollars and/or suspension from the program in future years.

Timeline for 2026 Club Excellence Program

- October 2025 – USA Swimming member club rankings announced by USA Swimming; Clubs receiving grant funding to be notified.
- January 2026 - Grant funding distributed.
- February 2026 - Banners or plaques to be distributed to Gold, Silver and Bronze level USA Swimming member clubs.

Best Practices Data Collection

Club Excellence program participants agree to participate in periodic information gathering surveys conducted by USA Swimming.

For More Information

Please contact USA Swimming at (719) 337-0143 or nchessey@usaswimming.org.