

H. Four Hour Rule:

All Michigan Swimming meets shall be conducted using the following rules for all swimmers regardless of age and all types of meets (except for the State Championship Meets, ABC Festivals, District Championships and Junior Olympics). Entries are to be accepted on a first come first serve basis until the maximum session time limits as stated below are met. Entries will be accepted by email date code or mail date code and processed only when the hard copies are received with payment. No entries are to be accepted after the maximum time limits are met. Guidelines commonly referred to as "Numbers of splashes" are not to be used in accepting entries.

1. All Timed Finals meets shall be no more than four hours (4:00) per session, excluding warm-ups.
2. All Prelim-Finals meets shall be no more than eight (8:00) hours per day, excluding warm-ups. These meets may have any combination of session lengths so long as the eight hours per day limit is not exceeded. This means that a preliminary session might last five hours but the finals session must then be completed within three hours (for a maximum total of eight hours per day).
3. In the event that the meet format is a combination of a Prelim/Final meet and a Timed Final Meet, both 1 and 2 above apply. This means that the Prelim-Finals portion of the meet needs to be completed within eight (8:00) combined hours for the two sessions. The timed final session must complete within the four (4:00) hours per session. In this meet format the total sessions, excluding warm-ups, shall be no longer than 12 hours and shall not go past 10:00 PM.
4. These guidelines do not apply to State Championships where all qualified swimmers shall be allowed to swim regardless of the length of the sessions. These guidelines also do not apply to the ABC Festivals, District Championships and Junior Olympics. ~~where all sessions in excess of 4 hours must be approved by the Program Operations Vice Chair, or in the Vice Chairs absence, the General Chair.~~

5. When establishing the sessions for a meet, use the following:

a. For sessions with events for swimmers 11&O, 15 second heat intervals with +15 seconds for backstroke are the minimum heat intervals to be used. If there are events that require the moving of timers, e.g. 50M Freestyle, insert breaks into the session timeline. Three (3) to five (5) minutes is suggested.

b. For sessions with events for swimmers 10&U, 20 second heat intervals with +15 seconds for backstroke are to be used. By using this heat interval, it takes into account over water starts and the movement of timers, i.e. 25y and 50M events.

Comment [MLG1]: Much discussion has been had over the proper length -- 20 or 25, or some number in between. At this point, we thought it would be best to set it at 20 and then change as necessary.

c. When evaluating entries for compliance with this rule, the sessions MUST be SEEDED.

d. The intervals stated above are minimums and host clubs may use longer intervals. The requirements of paragraphs 1, 2, and 3 must be met.

5. Grace Periods will be granted as follows:-

a. ~~Facility Issues/Weather/Unforeseen: Any session will be given a 15 minute grace period for unforeseen problems that occur as it is recognized that still water or down time causing a session to run over the 4 hours may be out of the control of the Meet Director and Meet Referee. This allows a session to run 4 hours and 15 minutes maximum. However, the Meet Director and Meet Referee must keep a record of time line by session noting periods of still water and the reasons for down time. Such valid reasons include but are not limited to, power failures, equipment failures, weather, and pool/facility repairs. No sanctions will apply under this subsection.~~

b. Sessions where all athletes are 13 and Over: One session per meet where all athletes are 13 and Over (does not include any swimmers 12 years and younger) will be given a 30 minute grace period as it is recognized that the number of entries received for a single session may be grossly disproportionate to other sessions. This allows a single session per meet to run 4 hours and 30 minutes maximum. No sanctions will apply under this subsection.

6. Reporting

a. Within two calendar days of the entry closure date as specified in the meet packet, the meet host must e-mail the Hytek Meet Manager back-up file to the Michigan Swimming Office (Jan Cartmill) and to Program Operations to verify compliance to this rule.

b. After the entry closure date, NO additional entries may be taken, other than deck entries and time trials as specified in the meet packet.

6. Reporting violations to the MS Board of Directors

a. Report by the Meet Referee to the Officials Chair and Program Ops: The Meet Referee of all MS Sanctioned swimming meets is under a mandatory duty to keep a written record of the length of all sessions at every swim meet, all grace period issues referred to in paragraph (6) (a) and (b) above and any other circumstances that affect a session's length during the entire meet. If any session at a swim meet exceeds four hours in length, the Meet Referee must report this fact along with the reasons therefore (i.e. any grace period issues, weather delays, etc.) to the Officials Chair and the Program Operations Vice-Chair within 10 days following the conclusion of the meet by filing a written report (a copy of which is available from the Officials Chair).

b. Report to the MS Board of Directors: The Officials Chair and the Program Operations Vice-Chair must then immediately refer any alleged violation of the four hour rule to the General Chair and the MS Board of Directors for their consideration and review at their next regularly scheduled Board Meeting. The General Chair shall place the matter on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Board meeting and give notice to the affected Meet Host/Director that they should appear at this Board meeting if they desire to offer explanation. The affected Meet Host/Director may choose to offer written explanation and argument regarding the alleged violation of the four hour rule rather than appear in person.

c. Report to the MS Board by Others: Notwithstanding paragraphs 7 (a) and (b) above, any party (athlete, coach, spectator, etc) may bring any alleged four hour rule violation to the Board of Directors attention for their consideration and review by contacting the General Chair and requesting that the matter be placed on the agenda at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting. In such circumstances the General Chair shall place the issue on the Board agenda and give notice to the parties involved to appear if they wish to. The affected Meet Host/Director may choose to offer written explanation and argument regarding the alleged violation of the four hour rule rather than appear in person.

7. Sanctions/Penalties:

a. Any backup file submitted in which any session violates this rule will be penalized as follows:

(1) FIRST OFFENSE: The host club is fined a \$500 ~~minimum \$250 to a maximum of \$1,000~~ per session.

(2) SECOND OFFENSE: The host club is fined \$750 ~~a minimum of \$500 to a maximum of \$1,500~~ per session and the host club may be barred, by a vote of the Board of Directors, from hosting a meet or meets for the rest of the season (includes either Short or Long Course or both).

(3) THIRD OFFENSE: The host club is fined \$1000 ~~a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$2,000~~ per session and the host club may be barred from hosting a meet or meets for up to two full seasons (includes either Short or Long Course or both) by a vote of the Board of Directors.

All fines are due when the meet sanction/athlete surcharge fees are paid ~~or, if the meet fees have already been paid, within 30 days after the Board of Directors decision.~~ If the fines are not paid in a timely manner (within 30 days of the conclusion of the meet), a \$20 per day penalty applies (in addition to the principal fine) beginning on the first day after the due date of the fine.

b. In determining whether or not a violation is a First, Second or Third offense ~~(a)~~ in meets where more than one session at the meet violated the four hour rule it will be considered a single violation (rather than multiple violations) and ~~(b)~~ an offense occurring more than five years in the past will not be considered.

c. Failure to submit a backup file to Program Operations and the Michigan Swimming office will be considered a violation of this rule and will automatically be penalized in accordance with paragraph a. above. For purposes of this paragraph, all sessions will be considered to be in violation.