

4.0 Travel

4.1 Athlete Travel Assistance

SUMMARY: The MA Travel Assistance Policy was modified in 2009. Assistance will now be provided to any swimmer that has achieved a National level Time Standard to attend any of the MA designated meets during each of the Winter, Spring and/or Summer seasons. Time Standards and approved meets will be published in October of each year. Eligibility requirements have been simplified. Awards during each season may be limited by the MA budget, and will be re-considered following the Summer season. College swimmers are not eligible for support during the college school year; swimmers 19 and over are exempt from the MA meet participation requirement (approved by MA Board at May, 2009 mtg.)

A. General

1. Middle Atlantic Swimming (MAS) will provide **Travel Assistance** to athletes participating in USA Swimming championship level meets, including Olympic and/or World Championship Trials (“Trials”), National Championships (“Nationals”), Junior National Championships (“Juniors”), the NCSA Junior National SC Championships (“NCSA Jrs”), the [Eastern Zone] Speedo Champions Series (“Sectionals”), and other comparable meets designated and approved by the MAS Board of Directors (the “**MEETS**”). In addition, **Travel Assistance** will be provided to athletes that attend designated USA Swimming Open Water (“OW”) and USA Swimming Adapted National Championships (“Adapted”).

“Nationals” shall be understood to include the USA Swimming (LC) National Championships, the USA Swimming Short Course Championships, the USA Swimming Spring Championships, and the US Open, when held. “Juniors” shall be understood to include both the LC and SC USA Swimming Junior National Championships. The “Trials” meets may either be held separately or in conjunction with a National Championship (“Nationals”) meet.

To receive **Travel Assistance** for a **MEET**, a swimmer must qualify for and participate in (see 4.1.A.2 below) at least one Individual Event at that **MEET**. Bonus events at the **MEET** shall not qualify to meet this participation requirement.

MAS also provides support for swimmers that attend the Eastern Zone (EZ) Short Course (All Star) and Long Course Age Group Championships (see section 4.1.C.5 below).

2. Participation in a **MEET** is defined as competing in at least one individual event at the specified meet. Swimmers who are disqualified from an event for either a stroke or turn violation or a false start may count that event for participation. Swimmers who take a Declared False Start, or are disqualified for failure to swim a deck-seeded event after they have checked in, or who fail to swim at Finals in an event for which they have qualified, except when such non-participation is for a medical or other reason that has been excused by the Meet Referee, may not count that event (i.e., a swimmer may not scratch from Finals in an event for which they have qualified and count that event toward participation.) Swimmers who are disqualified for unsportsmanlike conduct or because of a violation of a safety rule will receive **Travel Assistance** only after review and approval by the MAS Board of Directors (the “Board”).
3. The **Travel Assistance** program is managed by the **MAS Travel Fund Committee** (“**TFC**”), which shall be appointed annually as provided in Article 607.3.16 of the MAS ByLaws. The responsibilities of the **TFC** are defined in Article 607.4.10 of the ByLaws.
4. For **Travel Assistance** purposes, the ‘year’ shall be from September 1 through the following August 31 coinciding with the MA fiscal year. **MEETS** for which **Travel Assistance** is provided will be designated annually by the **TFC** for each of the Winter (September – December), Spring (January – April) and Summer (May – August) seasons. **Travel Assistance** may be approved for additional

meets during the Spring season when there is no 'National' level meet during that season. Requests for such approval must be made to and approved by the MAS Board no later than the February Board meeting.

5. A swimmer will generally be eligible to receive **Travel Assistance** for only one **MEET** during each season. A swimmer that attends a 'Trials' class meet that is held separately from a 'Nationals' meet shall be eligible to receive additional **Travel Assistance** for another **MEET** during the same season.

B. Travel Assistance Support

1. The amount of **Travel Assistance** provided to swimmers is based on their level of accomplishment, and not on the **MEET** that they attend. The **TFC** will issue **Time Standards** for each of the Winter/Spring and Summer seasons. In general, there will be two levels for the Winter/Spring season and three levels for the Summer season. The **Level 1** and **Level 2 Time Standards** will be different for the Winter/Spring and Summer seasons.
2. The **Time Standards** and the amount of support (the "Award") for each level of accomplishment shall be issued no later than October 15 of each year.
3. A swimmer that has achieved a **Level 1 Time Standard** prior to attending a **MEET** will receive the **Level 1 Award** regardless of which **MEET** they attend. A swimmer that has achieved a **Level 2 Time Standard** prior to attending a **MEET** will receive the **Level 2 Award** regardless of which **MEET** they attend. During the Summer season, a swimmer that has achieved a **Level 3 Time Standard** will receive the **Level 3 Award** regardless of which **MEET** they attend during the Summer season.
3. The **Travel Assistance** budget for each year shall be included in the annual MAS Budget; the **TFC** will determine the allocation of budgeted funds to each season. A separate allocation shall be made for a "Trials" meet, when held separate from a 'Nationals' meet. The basis for granting **Awards** to eligible swimmers is described in section 4.1.E.3
4. Current Awards are:

	<u>Winter/Spring</u>	<u>Summer</u>
Level 1	\$ 550	\$ 600
Level 2	450	450
Level 3		300

C. Eligibility Requirements

1. Registration –
 - a) To receive **Travel Assistance** for a **MEET**, a swimmer must be currently registered in MAS at the time of the funded travel.
 - b) The **Travel Assistance** support provided to each swimmer may be reduced based on the number of years that swimmer has been registered in MAS, as follows:
 - (1) First registration year in MAS – not eligible – i.e., no Award.
 - (2) Second registration year in MAS – 25% of **Award**.
 - (3) Third registration year in MAS – 50% of **Award**.
 - (4) Fourth registration year in MAS – 75% of **Award**.
 - (5) Fifth and subsequent years in MAS – 100% of **Award**.
 - c) To receive credit for a 'registration year in MAS,' the swimmer must be registered with Middle Atlantic Swimming on September 1 of each year. Once determined, the 'registration years in MAS' for each swimmer will remain the same for the entire year – i.e., registration after

September 1 will NOT increase the number of years toward determination of an Award.

- d) Registration with MAS may be either through a Middle Atlantic Club or as an UNattached athlete.

2. Meet Participation

- a) To receive **Travel Assistance**, a swimmer must have participated in at least two (2) MAS Sanctioned meets that are open to all age- and time-eligible MAS swimmers within the one-year period immediately preceding the **MEET** for which an award is granted. Participation in a MAS meet is as defined in paragraph 4.1.A.2 above. Participation in a sanctioned Time Trial, Dual, Intra-squad or other 'closed' meet does NOT qualify toward this MAS participation requirement.
- b) As participation at MAS Meets by athletes receiving **Travel Assistance** is designed to present a positive role model experience to other swimmers, all applicants are expected to put forth a good faith effort in their MAS swims.

D. Time Standards

- 1. **Time Standards** for two levels of support during the Winter and Spring seasons and three levels for the Summer season will be established and published by the TFC no later than October 15 of each year. The **Time Standards** will remain in effect for the year – i.e., from September 1 through the following August 31.
- 2. Unless determined otherwise by the TFC, the **Winter/Spring Level 1 Time Standards** shall be the qualifying times for the USA Swimming SC Championships and the **Level 2 Time Standards** shall be the qualifying times for the USA Swimming SC Junior Championships. The **Summer Level 1 Time Standards** shall be the qualifying times for the USA Swimming National (LC) Championship, the **Level 2 Time Standards** shall be the qualifying times for the USA Swimming LC Junior Championships, and the **Level 3 Time Standards** shall be the 'bonus' qualifying times for the USA Swimming SC Junior championships.
- 3. The qualifying period for achieving a Time Standard shall be no earlier than the following dates one year prior to the Meet (i.e., within the previous approx 12-16 months):

Winter	September 1
Spring	January 1
Summer	June 1

E. Application / Payment

- 1. All **Travel Assistance** awards will be paid to the swimmer's respective Club. A Club representative should submit the **Request for Travel Assistance** form, a copy of the **MEET** entry form and proof of participation at the **MEET** to the MAS Office, Attn: Travel Administrator. The form should include any UN-attached swimmers associated with the Club. UN-attached swimmers with no Club association should contact the MAS Office regarding their support.
- 2. The deadline for submission of a completed **Request for Travel Assistance** form is as follows:
 - (a) for Winter MEETS, by December 20 or fifteen (15) days following the last day of any Winter MEET, whichever is later.
 - (b) for Spring MEETS, by April 15 or fifteen (15) days following the last day of any Spring MEET, whichever is later.
 - (c) for Summer MEETS, by August 25 or fifteen (15) days following the last day of any Summer MEET, whichever is later.
 - (d) for any other MEET, fifteen (15) days following the last day of the MEET.
- 3. During each season, **Travel Assistance Awards** shall be first paid to all swimmers attending a **MEET** that have achieved a **Level 1 Time Standard**; and then to those swimmers attending a

MEET that have achieved a **Level 2 Time Standard**; and then (Summer only) to those swimmers attending a **MEET** that have achieved a **Level 3 Time Standard**. If there are not sufficient remaining budgeted funds within any season to grant the full **Award** to all eligible swimmers at that Award level, then the available budgeted funds shall be equally distributed to those eligible swimmers at that Level, taking into account any reductions as noted in section 4.1.C.1b above.

4. At the completion of the Summer season, the **TFC** shall meet to consider any appeals and to decide whether any remaining undistributed funds should be granted to swimmers that did not previously receive a full **Award** payment.
5. All **Travel Assistance** awards must be reviewed and approved by the Finance Vice-Chair before payment to any Club or individual.

F. College and post-High School swimmers

1. Any swimmer participating in a college program (NCAA, NJCAA, NAIA, etc) is NOT eligible to receive any **Travel Assistance** for the period from September 1 through May 31. Such swimmers may receive **Travel Assistance** during the Summer season if they meet the other requirements. The MAS meet participation requirement will be waived for such swimmers.
2. College swimmers must represent Middle Atlantic at the **MEET** - either a MAS Club or as MA-UN. This may be a 'dual' representation when permitted by the **MEET**.
3. College swimmers that are registered with their college team on September 1 (i.e., they are not registered with MAS) may request that their status be reviewed by the **TFC**.
4. Post-high school graduates that are not attending or participating on a college program and are at least nineteen (19) years of age at the time of the funded **MEET** are exempt from the MAS meet participation requirement.

Note: it is expected that college swimmers receiving Travel Assistance support from MAS are (a) training with a MAS club at the time of funding, and (b) not receiving additional funding from their college program to attend the MEET.

G. Waivers / Appeals

1. In extenuating circumstances, certain eligibility or participation requirements may be waived by the **MAS Board**. An **Application for Waiver** should be submitted by the Club representative (or UN-attached swimmer) to the MAS office.
2. An Appeal of any decision regarding **Travel Assistance** may be made by the Club representative (or UN-attached swimmer) to the **MAS Board** by submitting a letter to the MA Office; such appeal must be submitted by October 1 following the meet in question (see 4.1.C.5 above).

H. Open Water

1. MAS will provide **Travel Assistance** to swimmers ~~attended designated~~attending and participating in a USA Swimming National Open Water (OW) Championship or Trials meet, a FINA World Cup meet, or other OW events when approved by the MAS Board.
2. Requirements
 - a. In order to receive Travel Assistance for Open Water meets, a swimmer must meet and are subject to the same Registration (see 4.1.C.1) and Meet Participation (4.1.c.2) requirements as noon-OW swimmers.
 - b. ~~Swimmers attending OW events~~ To receive OW Travel Assistance, a swimmer must have

achieved a Summer Level 2-1 Time Standard (a Summer National LC qualifying time) ~~and are subject to the Registration requirements as described above.~~

Formatted

3. Support

a. The amount of support for OW events will be determined by the MAS ~~Board-TFC~~ and will be equivalent to the support provided to swimmers for comparable meets, but not to exceed \$500.

b. Travel Assistance for OW shall be funded separately in the MAS budget.

4. Applications for OW support must be submitted to the MAS Office by fifteen (15) days following the last day of competition at the meet, and should include a copy of the meet Entry Form and proof of participation at the meet. Travel Assistance awards will be paid to the swimmer's Club.

5. All athletes are limited to three MAS Travel Assistance awards in any year, including both pool and OW. Exception: when an OW event is held at the same location and general time frame as a supported pool event and the swimmer is qualified and receives support for the pool event, the swimmer may receive an additional \$100 award for the OW meet.

I. Adapted Swimming Championships

1. MAS will provide **Travel Assistance** to swimmers attended designated Adapted Swimming or Paralympic Championship events when approved by the MAS **Board**.

2. The amount of support for athletes attending these meets will be determined by the MAS **Board** and will be equivalent to the support provided to swimmers for comparable meets.