



# CLUB EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

REVISED: JANUARY 4, 2024

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW:

Have you ever wondered what "great" clubs do to be great? That question is at the heart of the Club Excellence Program (CEP). This program offers our member clubs a working blueprint for developing strong, stable and successful organizations.

Designed by USA Artistic Swimming (USAAS) staff and a working group from the Membership Committee, this voluntary program presents four levels meant to encourage clubs to establish organizational goals and benchmark their progress.

The ultimate objective of the program is to strengthen the club system in the USA by guiding clubs through a development process that ultimately positions the program and its coaches to better serve athletes.

Each level will touch on five major component areas USAAS found are factors that helped create "great" clubs. Those five major component areas:

- 1 BUSINESS & ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS**
- 2 COACH, PARENT & VOLUNTEER DEVELOPMENT**
- 3 ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT & PERFORMANCE**
- 4 CLUB PARTICIPATING THROUGHOUT USAAS OFFERED PROGRAMS**
- 5 SAFESPORT AND BACKGROUND SCREENING COMPLIANCE**

## WHAT IS REQUIRED & HOW TO GET STARTED:

Some markers require specific actions by the club. For example:

- Checklists
- Proof of documentation

Upon completion of a level, the club director or manager will send their supporting documentation and checklist to the membership committee to be reviewed. If the committee approves their completion of the the level, the club will be sent a certificate illustrating completion of that level. The club's current achieved level is also listed in the club search feature on the USAAS website.

Participation in the program requires an investment of time and attention by each club. As with anything that provides true benefit, we believe this investment is worthwhile and will pay significant dividends over time. We encourage the leaders in your club to strongly consider participation in the program and how it can benefit your organization. Each level of the program will require the clubs to evaluate their current structure and promote change and growth for a stronger future.

If you need help getting started contact USAAS Membership and Athlete Safety Manager, Kelly Premo at [kelly@usaartisticswim.org](mailto:kelly@usaartisticswim.org).

## NEW! SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- All items are to be in PDF Form ONLY (We will not accept Word Docs)
- Email Subject Line: “Club Name - Level (Number you are applying for) Application”
  - Ex: Unaffiliated - Level 1 Application
- Provide Documentation for each requirement
- Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis through July 31st.
- For some requirements, there is information for what to provide. Please read carefully. If you have questions on what to submit, please email [kelly@usaartistcswim.org](mailto:kelly@usaartistcswim.org)

We have provided documents to make it consistent and easier to be filled out. They can be found on our [webpage](#). Please follow instructions for categories below:

- Financial: use “Budget Outline” sheet on the excel document or [Financial Disclosure Waiver](#) if applicable
- Coach Certification: Use “Coach Training” sheet in [excel document](#)
  - (1.30.24) DEI trainings have been added to the Coach Certification requirement. This includes our partnership with Guardian Quest and the USOPC’s Connection Based Coaching
- Judge: Use “Judge Training” sheet in excel document
  - (1.30.24) There have been updates made to this requirement to include DTC and STC certifications
- Grade Levels Testing: Use “Athlete Grade Levels” sheet in excel document
- Compliance - Use “SafeSport and Background” sheet in excel document
- Fundraiser Information: use [Fundraiser Information PDF](#)





# LEVEL ONE - EMERGING CLUB

Level I is our entry level and the first step in our CEP. Level I will help clubs with grassroots development and strengthening the club an organization. We will focus on the club's business operations as well as athlete training programs.

## REQUIRED ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Club Development
  - Mission Statement
  - Logo/Website
  - Club Board of Directors
  - Athlete handbook or code of conduct
    - Athlete Bill of Rights covered in this handbook
  - Parent handbook or code of conduct
- USAAS Organization Involvement
  - Attend at least two competitions in your local area during the competition season
  - Your club must follow USA Artistic Swim on social media
- Foundation Involvement
  - Your club must follow the Foundation on social media
- Financial
  - Club financial and budget outline
- Coach Certification
  - All coaches meet requirements to be a coach. (CCP, CPR/FA, SafeSport & Background Check)
  - All coaches must be certified at the minimum of Level 1 CCP
- Judge Development
  - At least one staff member as a Level 1 judge or above and is current in all requirements
  - At least one staff member has DTC or STC
- Level Testing
  - Club shows active participation in at least one level testing during the season
- Compliance
  - Compliance with SafeSport and background screening for all members required to comply



## LEVEL TWO - DEVELOPING CLUB

Level II is our development phase. How has your club focused on creating better coaches, training staff, and developing better programming for its members? We will evaluate the level of training your staff has participated in and how much growth has been achieved from Level I.

### REQUIRED ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Club Development
  - Volunteer options for parents/guardians
  - Parent participation in board meetings or club meetings
  - Athlete with disability program plan - Please provide adequate documentation of AWD program implementation plans. This includes communications with facilities (pools) that include things a like, a requested plan for practice schedule and requested plan for AWD participants
- USAAS Organization Involvement
  - Representation at either Convention or Coaches College
    - At least one coach/team representative present annually at either event
  - Representation in Association and/or Zone competitions
    - Attends at least one of these competitions during the season
- Foundation Involvement
  - Club participates in USAAS Foundation Splash Bash Fundraiser
- Financial
  - At least one fundraiser during the season - does not matter amount earned, please list what fundraisers have been hosted.
- Coach Certification
  - All coaches meet requirements to be a coach. (CCP, CPR/FA, SafeSport & Background Check) All coaches must be certified at the minimum of Level 1 CCP. At least one coach is certified at CCP 3
  - At least one coach has gone through DEI “Guardian Question” training [here](#)
  - At least one coach has taken the “Connection Based Coaching” training [here](#)
- Judge Development
  - At least one staff member is certified as a Level 2 judge or above and is current in all requirements
  - At least one staff member has DTC certification and at least one staff member has STC certification
- Level Testing
  - 50% of competitive athlete members have passed Levels 1 and 2
- Compliance
  - All coaching staff and club BOD members are SafeSport Trained and background checked



# LEVEL THREE - HIGH PERFORMING CLUB

At this level we evaluate how you are developing your athletes inside and outside of the pool. Advancing athletes through grade levels to further develop their artistic swimming skills and encouraging involvement in our greater community are essential at this level.

## REQUIRED ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Club Development
  - Community sponsor - can be a sponsor in community who provided food or items at event. Does not have to be a corporate sponsor
  - Host local camps or 'try artistic swimming for a day' camps
    - 25% or more retention rate from these programs
  - At least two health related activities outside of sport during the season (ex: nutrition, PT, mental health, etc.)
  - Athlete with Disability Program Plan Implemented - There is no required number of participant AWD athletes, only that the program is operating regularly throughout the season
- USAAS Organization Involvement
  - Athletes and staff of club hold USAAS committee spots
- Foundation Involvement
  - Club identifies and introduces a donor to the USAAS Foundation
- Financials
  - At least two fundraisers during the season (at any capacity)
- Coach Certification
  - All coaches meet requirements to be a coach. (CCP, CPR/FA, SafeSport & Background Check) All coaches must be certified at the minimum of Level 1 CCP
  - At least two coaches are certified at CCP 3
  - At least two coaches have gone through DEI "Guardian Question" training [here](#)
  - At least two coaches have taken the "Connection Based Coaching" training [here](#)
- Judge Development
  - At least one staff member is certified as a Level 3 judge or above and is current in all requirements.
  - At least one staff member has DTC certification and at least one staff member has STC certification
- Level Testing
  - 100% of all competitive athletes have passed level 1 & 2,
  - 50% of all competitive athletes have passed level 3
- Compliance
  - All coaching staff and club BOD members are SafeSport Training and background checked
  - 50% of parents/guardians of the club SafeSport trained





## LEVEL FOUR - ELITE CLUB

Level IV is our highest level of accomplishment. Clubs reaching this level have well-established programs with a set budget and financial plan, have athletes that are competing at an elite level and/or competing on our national team programs, are involved with their community and are fully compliant with all required trainings and certifications.

### REQUIRED ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Club Development
  - Complete annual athlete review/well-being survey
  - Athletes participate annually in national team trials
  - Demonstrate and provide examples of how they prioritize athlete safety/well-being
  - Athlete with disability entries at national championship and/or USAAS invitational events
- USAAS Organization Involvement
  - Athletes and staff of club hold USAAS committee spots
  - Active role in USAAS DEI Initiatives
    - Ex: attending DEI meetings or have a member on the DEI committee
- Foundation Involvement
  - Club participates in annual giving Examples:
    - Club or club member is a \$1,000 or greater donor
    - Club hosts a watch party
    - Club purchases a table at the Foundation dinner
- Financials
  - Club hosts an annual showcase/recital that demonstrates a financial profit for the club
- Coach Certification
  - All coaches meet requirements to be a coach. (CCP, CPR/FA, SafeSport & Background Check) All coaches must be certified at the minimum of Level 2 CCP
  - At least two coaches are certified at CCP 3
  - At least two coaches have gone through DEI “Guardian Question” training [here](#)
  - At least two coaches have taken the “Connection Based Coaching” training [here](#)
- Judge Development
  - At least one staff member is certified as a Level 4 judge or above OR has at least 2 club members that are a Level 2 or 3 judge and is current in all requirements
  - At least two staff member have DTC certification and at least two staff members have STC certification.
- Level Testing
  - 100% of competitive athletes have passed levels 1-3
  - 25% of all competitive athletes have passed levels 4-6
- Compliance
  - All coaching staff and club BOD members are SafeSport Training and background checked
  - 100% of parents/guardians of the club SafeSport trained



## **COMPLETION REWARDS**

### **LEVEL 1: EMERGING CLUB**

Upon completing all requirements and receiving a passing mark from the membership committee, the club will receive a signed poster from the USA national team.

### **LEVEL 2: DEVELOPING CLUB**

Reward for completing Level II is one free CCP training and one judge level training. This can be used on separate or the same individual and must be completed within a calendar year of reaching Level 2.

### **LEVEL 3: HIGH PERFORMING CLUB**

Incentive for completing this level of the Club Excellence Program is one free entry for the following year annual convention.

### **LEVEL 4: HIGH PERFORMING CLUB**

Club's reaching Level 4 status will have their club membership fee waived for the following season. Clubs also reaching Level 4 will be kept on retainer as mentors for clubs trying to pass Levels 1 and 2.