

TEXAS AMATEUR ATHLETIC FEDERATION

SWIMMING

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T.A.A.F. WINTER GAMES OF TEXAS

January 13-14, 2024

Victoria, TX

For Games information visit the T.A.A.F. website: www.taaf.com

T.A.A.F. SUMMER GAMES OF TEXAS

July 25-28, 2024

Brownsville

For Games information visit the T.A.A.F. website: www.taaf.com

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A non-profit organization established in 1925, incorporated and dedicated to develop and perpetuate interest in amateur sports and to further the spirit of sportsmanship in Texas.

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PLEASE READ ALL RULES –THERE ARE IMPORTANT ARTICLES PERTAINING TO AGE DETERMINATION DATES, REGISTRATION DEADLINE DATES AND FEES.

T.A.A.F. Manual of Procedures

ARTICLE 2 GENERAL PARTICIPATION REQUIREMENTS

No player shall be eligible to play in any T.A.A.F. sport unless the player meets all of the following rules:

- 2.1 Must be an amateur in said sport and shall receive no pay to play for any team. An amateur is defined as “one who engages in sport for pleasure and for the physical, mental or social benefits, which he or she derives from that sport and to whom the sport is nothing more than an avocation.”
- 2.2 Any player who has played professional sports shall be ineligible to participate in that sport for one (1) year after his last day as a member of a professional team. This rule shall not conflict with the AABC rules in baseball.

Note: The protesting individual(s) bear the entire burden of proof regarding a player’s participation as a member of a professional team. The T.A.A.F. state commissioner has the final authority to accept or reject the protesting individual(s) proof.

- 2.3 Meets all team qualifications in MOP Article 4.
- 2.4 Does not play under an assumed name.
- 2.5 In order to compete in any T.A.A.F. play, a foreign player must reside in the state of Texas continuously for a minimum period of one (1) year prior to being eligible to play.

Exception: Men’s and women’s fast pitch foreign softball players’ eligibility will be determined by the national governing body of softball. To be eligible to participate in T.A.A.F. softball, a copy of any document required to be on file by the NGB for softball must also be filed with the T.A.A.F. state office. The same filing deadline applies for the NGB and T.A.A.F.

- 2.6 An adult player may play on more than one team within a region, but must choose one team as his/her own prior to T.A.A.F. championship play.
 - .01 No player may be on more than one roster, in a T.A.A.F. division, during T.A.A.F. championship play (region and state tournaments).
 - .02 A player must be on the sports roster by the deadline state in the participant guide.
- 2.7 A player forced to transfer from one region to another by his employer may participate in the new region providing the player has been employed by the firm for at least one (1) full year prior to the transfer and the player remains employed by the same firm.
- 2.8 Individual sport participants must reside in the state of Texas.
- 2.9 The team or individual attempting to qualify for state competition must attempt to qualify through the regional qualifier of the region in which they are registered. No participant in an individual sport or a team in team sports may attempt to qualify through more than one city, region or affiliate. Should any team or individual be discovered in violation of this rule, he/she/they shall be disqualified from that sport for that year.
- 2.10 Any region competition must take place within the established boundaries of the assigned region. If it becomes necessary to host a region competition outside of the designated boundary, prior written consent is required by the region in which the event is being held.

- 2.11 Player identification:
- .01 A player must be prepared, at all times, to provide proof of identification. A driver's license or comparable identification, which includes a current photograph and signature, is acceptable.
 - .02 A player must be prepared, at all times, to provide proof of age when participating in T.A.A.F. sports categorized by age classifications or divisions. A driver's license or copy of a birth certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics is acceptable.
 - .03 A player failing to provide appropriate proof of age or identifications, when requested by a meet director, tournament director or state commissioner, may be declared ineligible and the team/player subject to disqualification.
- 2.12 All teams must wear like colored, non-duplicated numbered jerseys for regional and state tournaments.
- 2.13 All participants in adult team sports must have attained the age of sixteen (16) prior to the registration date for teams in that sport, unless specific sport regulations provide otherwise.
- 2.14 Age determination for youth sports

Sport	Age Determining Date
Basketball (Boy's & Girl's Winter)	September 1 of current school year
Basketball (Boy's & Girl's Summer)	September 1 of current calendar year
Boxing	Based on age as of the Games of Texas
Cheerleading	September 1 of current year
Flag Football – youth	September 1 of current year
Golf – youth	September 1 of current year
Gymnastics	January 1 of the year of competition
Inline Hockey	September 1 of current year
Kickball – Youth	September 1 of the current school year
Softball – Youth	December 31 of current year
Swimming – Summer	June 1 of current year
Swimming – Winter	Age as of the Winter Games of Texas swim meet
Tennis	Age as of Games of Texas dates
Track and Field	Based on year the athlete was born
Volleyball – Youth	September 1 of current school year

ARTICLE 3 YOUTH SPORTS COACHING REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 All coaches that are participating in regional and state competitions representing TAAF member cities, or affiliates, must be approved through a criminal background check process. Only the TAAF certified criminal background check program will be accepted. No other criminal background check programs will be accepted. If a coach fails the TAAF certified criminal background check then they would be deemed ineligible to coach. A member city (under official city accounts only) may submit affidavits.
- 3.2 Coaches can be approved through two options:
- 3.2.01 Approved through the TAAF state office background check process
 - 3.2.02 Approved by the TAAF member city by signing the "TAAF coaches background check affidavit" confirming that checks were completed at the local level. This can only be done by a "member city" under an official account only by completing the affidavit form.
- 3.3 All coaches must be approved prior to registering for any regional or state competition

- 3.4 Coaches representing swim or track must be approved by June 30th or two weeks prior to competition whichever comes first
- 3.5 TAAF approved coaching status is valid for 1 year. Coaches can re-certify following the process outlined above
- 3.6 TAAF gymnastic coaches should follow the coaching background rules outlined in the gymnastics sports rules

ARTICLE 5 INDIVIDUAL SPORT REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Individual Sports: Individual sports included participants in boxing, golf, gymnastics, swimming, tennis, and track & field. Individual sport registration will be done online at www.T.A.A.F..com. Individual athletes must register with T.A.AF. prior to the athlete's participation in any T.A.A.F. meet/tournament on a local or regional level.

.01 Deadline for T.A.A.F. Registration is determined by the regional and state tournament dates-

Boxing	Games of Texas Entry_Deadline
Golf	Games of Texas Entry Deadline
Gymnastics	January 1
Swimming - Summer	June 15
Tennis	June 15
Track & Field	June 15

.02 The registering city or affiliate shall send a signed individual waiver or a signed individual sports participant waiver to the T.A.A.F. state office.

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.03 The determining factor of which city/organization/region an individual will represent in attempt(s) to qualify for state level competition is based on the city/organization/region declare at the time of registering online with T.A.A.F..

- a. This rule is to allow individuals to compete outside of their city of residency due the fact they are participating with another city or organization's program on an ongoing basis.
- b. It is NOT the intent of this rule to allow teams as a whole, to compete in or represent other cities/regions due to the location of the regional meets, changes in individual schedules or other such situations.

5.2 Individual Registration Fees

.01 The participant fee for T.A.A.F. individual sports shall be ten dollars (\$10.00).

- a. A late fee of five dollars (\$5.00) per individual may be charged to any registration after the deadline date.
- b. Regions may add a regional individual sports registration fee of up to \$2.00 per individual.

.02 Unattached Individual Participants: The fee for an unattached participant are twenty dollars (\$20.00) per year. Payment of this fee allows the unattached member to participate in T.A.A.F. individual sport programs and includes the cost of the individual sport fee of \$5.00.

- a. Unattached athlete is a singular registration, thus they are ineligible for team events (i.e. relays). Additionally, unattached athletes do not get all privileges of teams (i.e. coaches passes or other similar team privileges).

- .03 Insurance may be purchased for an additional fee. Contact the T.A.A.F. state office for fees and enrollment information.
- 5.3 Regional Tournament/Meet Registration: Cities, Affiliates and Unattached Participants are required to comply with all requested information and fees as set forth by the Participant Guide regional tournament/meet director.
- .01 Maximum regional meet entry fee for track & field and swimming shall be \$10.00 per competitor, per event.
- a) In lieu of regional meet entry fees, the region may elect to implement a regional participation fee not to exceed \$20.00 per competitor.
- b) In the event a region hosts another region's (out of region) regional meet the maximum regional meet entry fee for the (out of region) participants in track and field and swimming shall be \$12.00 per competitor, per event.
- .02 Online registration for region meets is mandatory for track and field. Online registration or Hy-Tek Team/Meet Manager is mandatory for swimming.
- .03 The deadline for regional track meet registration is midnight, one (1) week prior to the start of the region meet.
- 5.4 State Tournament Registration: Cities, Affiliates and Unattached Participants should refer to the participant guide and are required to comply with all requested information, fees, etc., as set forth by the tournament director, regional director and state commissioner.

5.5 Individual State Meet/Tournament Entry Fees:

Boxing	\$8.00 per competitor
Golf	\$5.00 per competitor
Gymnastics – Qualifying Achievement Levels 1-2 & Xcel Bronze	\$50.00 per gymnast
Gymnastics – Qualifying Placement Levels 3P-8 & Xcel Silver, Gold, Platinum, Diamond and Open Optional	\$55.00 per gymnast
Gymnastics – Qualifying Late Fee	\$20.00 per gymnast
Gymnastics – Qualifying Meet Team Fee	Included in individual entry
Gymnastics - State Achievement Levels 1-2 & Xcel Bronze	\$65.00 per gymnast
Gymnastics - State Placement Levels 3P-8 and Xcel Silver, Gold, Platinum, Diamond and Open Optional	\$80.00 per gymnast
Gymnastics – State Team Fee	\$25.00 per level
Gymnastics State Late Fee	\$20.00 per gymnast
Swimming	\$10.00 per competitor, per event
Tennis	\$15.00 per competitor, per event
Track & Field	\$10.00 per competitor, per event

ARTICLE 25 SWIMMING

The state commissioner may implement procedures to adjust the eligibility requirements, entries, late fees, protest fee, events, awards, division, and meet operation procedure if the state commissioner deems necessary to assure a more effective meet for both spectators and participants. The information will be available to the member city/coaches in the state meet packet.

25.1 Swimming is an individual sport.

- .01 See MOP Article 2 General Participation Requirements.
- .02 See MOP Article 5 Individual Sport Requirements

25.2 T.A.A.F. swimming is open to anyone meeting the following eligibility criteria:

- .01 Winter Games of Texas Swim Meet
 - a. This event is open to all swimmers regardless of affiliation.
 - b. Summer swimmers ages 12 & under may practice up until the Winter Meet provided they register and participate in the Winter Meet.
 - c. Swimmers enter the meet via protocol established by the State Office.
 - d. The age-up date is the date of the meet.
 - e. See Rule 23.7 for additional information.
- .02 Summer Games of Texas Swim Meet
 - a. Swimmers ages 12 & under must follow guidelines below. Failure to do so may result in disqualification from T.A.A.F. Swimming. Repeated violations from individuals on the same team may result in the team or coach disqualification from T.A.A.F. Swimming:
 - 1. January 1-April 30 is considered “off-season.”
 - 2. Swimmers may not compete in any non-school related year round swim meet.
 - 3. Stroke and turn clinics – individual participation is limited to 90 minutes per week.
 - 4. Winter Meet participation – see 23.2.01.b
 - b. Swimmers 13 & over are exempt from restrictions.
 - c. Eligibility protests should be resolved at the regional level and prior to the regional meet. State meet eligibility protests must be resolved by NOON on Tuesday prior to the state meet.
 - d. Swimmers must register with T.A.A.F. via the protocol established by the State Office, prior to competing.
 - e. Swimmers 14 & under must qualify via a region meet (23.5)
 - f. The age-up date is June 1.

25.3 Swimmers must compete in their age and gender category. Swimming up or down an age category is not allowed.

.01 Male and female: 6 & under; 8 & under; 9-10; 11-12; 13-14; 15-17; 18-24; 25-28; 30-34; 35-39; 40-44; 45-49; 50-54; etc. in 5-year age increments

- a. Exception: if an event is only offered as 8 & under (i.e. breaststroke), 6 & under may compete in that event but ALL of that swimmer’s events for the meet must be in the 8 & under category.

.02 Coaches should keep certified copies of birth certificates in the event of an age or gender dispute.

.03 EVENTS (Same for Male and Female):

a. 6 & UNDER

25	FREESTYLE
25	BACKSTROKE
100	FREESTYLE RELAY

Swimmers ages 6 & under who wish to swim any other event will compete in the 8 & under age division. Swimmers may NOT compete in the same event in two age groups.

b. 8 & UNDER AND 9-10 AGE GROUPS

100	MEDLEY RELAY	25	BACKSTROKE
100	FREESTYLE RELAY	25	BREASTSTROKE

25	FREESTYLE	25	BUTTERFLY
50	FREESTYLE	100	INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

c. 11-12 AGE GROUPS

200	MEDLEY RELAY	50	BACKSTROKE
200	FREESTYLE RELAY	50	BREASTSTROKE
50	FREESTYLE	50	BUTTERFLY
100	FREESTYLE	100	INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY

d. 13-14 AND 15-17 AGE GROUPS

200	MEDLEY RELAY	50	BACKSTROKE
200	FREESTYLE RELAY	50	BREASTSTROKE
50	FREESTYLE	50	BUTTERFLY
100	FREESTYLE	100	INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY
200	FREESTYLE	200 Mixed Freestyle Relay (15-17 only)	
100 Mixed Freestyle Relay (15-17 only)		200 Mixed Medley Relay (15-17 only)	

Mixed Relays are of mixed gender, of which at least two must be female.

e. 18 & over in 5 year increments; All relays are 18 & over

200	MEDLEY RELAY	50	BACKSTROKE
200	FREESTYLE RELAY	50	BREASTSTROKE
50	FREESTYLE	50	BUTTERFLY
100	FREESTYLE	100	INDIVIDUAL MEDLEY
200	FREESTYLE	200	MIXED FREESTYLE RELAY
100	MIXED FREESTYLE RELAY	200	MIXED MEDLEY RELAY

Mixed Relays are of mixed gender, of which at least two must be female.

25.4 The T.A.A.F. rulebook is the governing rulebook. Rules not specifically covered in this rulebook are covered by the "Official High School Swimming, Diving & Water Polo rules" published by the National Federation of State High School Associations.

.01 T.A.A.F. Swimming follows FINA guidelines regarding participant swimsuits
Exceptions:

- a. T-shirts for modesty or religious reasons. Shirts may not provide an advantage to the swimmer.
- b. Caps: Swimmers may wear any cap as long as the design, images, or words are not offensive or inappropriate as determined by the State Commissioner and/or Head Meet Official

.02 T.A.A.F. Swimming uses the NFSHS protocol for starting races.

- a. The starter/referee signals the swimmers with a series of short whistles to approach the blocks and prepare to swim; followed by the announcer or starter/referee announcing the event/distance/heat.
- b. When all swimmers have approached the blocks, the starter/referee blows a long whistle for the heat to step up on the blocks for forward starts, or enter the water for backstroke starts, and take their preparatory position.
- c. Once all swimmers are in their preparatory position, the referee turns the heat over to the starter.
- d. The starter says, "take your mark."

- e. If a swimmer does not respond promptly to the “take your mark” command, the starter shall immediately release all swimmers with the command “stand up,” upon which the swimmers may stand up or relax.
- f. When the swimmers assumes the correct starting position, and are motionless, the starter activates the starting signal.

.03 T.A.A.F. Swimming uses the following ‘false start’ protocols:

- a. For ages 10 & under: one false start is allowed. At the initial start, the heat is recalled if any swimmer is observed prior to the start signal. The initial false start is charged to the heat. The starter shall restart the race upon signal from the referee. If the referee independently observes and confirms the starter’s observation that a subsequent violation occurs, the race shall continue without recall. The swimmer(s) who committed the subsequent violation shall be disqualified upon completion of the race.
- b. For ages 11 & over: swimmers starting before the starting signal shall be disqualified if the Referee independently observes and confirms the starter’s observation that a violation occurred. Swimmers remaining on the blocks shall be relieved from their starting position with a “stand up.” The race is restarted upon signal from the referee. If the starting signal is given prior to declaring the disqualification, the race shall continue without recall. If the referee independently observes and confirms the starter’s observation that a violation occurs, the swimmer(s) who committed the violation shall be disqualified upon completion of the race.
- c. If the recall signal is activated inadvertently, there is no false start and the starter will restart the race upon signal by the referee. If a false start was caused by the swimmer’s reaction to the “stand up” command, no false start is charged.
- d. A swimmer is not disqualified for an illegal starting position at the start of the race if the race is permitted to proceed. Enforcement of the correct starting position is the responsibility of the starter.

.04 The State Commissioner or Meet Director shall approve all finish times and has the authority to adjust the finish times due to problems associated with the electronic timing system, touching the electronic touch pads, and/or manual times.

25.5 T.A.A.F. Regional Swim Meets

- .01 T.A.A.F. Regions must host a regional swim meet to qualify and enter participants into the state meet.
 - a. Athletes 14 & under must qualify at the region meet.
 - b. Athletes 15 & over must enter the state meet at the region meet.
- .02 Regional meets are conducted and operated according to T.A.A.F. rules, including starting protocols (whistles), false starts, and events offered.
- .03 Region meets are held no later than the Sunday prior to the state entry deadline.
 - a. **No T.A.A.F. sponsored swim events will be allowed the weekend prior to the Games of Texas (other than regionals) unless there is an issue with securing facilities.**
- .04 If a region does not allow for electronic entries via Hy-tek, or a team does not have the required program, regional meet entries are entered on-line via the protocol established by the State Office.
 - a. Region meet hosts will receive the meet file from the state office once the posted deadline has passed.
- .05 Regional Event limitations per athlete
 - a. Ages 8 & under; 6 & under may compete in no more than three (3) total events, including relays.
 - b. Ages 9-10 may compete in no more than four (4) total events, including relays.

- c. Ages 11-14 may compete in no more than four (4) individual events, plus two (2) relays.
 - d. Relays events – relay athletes are the four (4) listed swimmers, plus no more than two (2) listed alternates.
 - e. Exception to event limitations: Swimmer may be listed as an alternate on any relay(s). Swimmers may scratch from one event to swim on the relay ONLY if a teammate listed on the relay is scratched from the meet. This change must be made prior to the start of the meet, or as approved by the Regional Swim Commissioner/Meet Director once the meet begins.
 - f. 15-17 may compete in four (4) events, plus two (2) gender specific relays, plus the mixed relays (maximum of 9).
 - g. 18 & over may compete in unlimited events.
 - h. Regions have the right to not swim 15 & over at the region meet due to space or time limitations.
- .06 T.A.A.F. Region Meets are conducted as timed final championships. Any ties are resolved at the region meet.
- a. Region Swim Commissioner/Meet Director must consider the rule(s) and the timing system used, and then follow procedures to select the correct time(s) and placements of swimmers.
 - b. If still a tie, a swim off is held to break the tie.
- .07 Regional Entry Allocation to the State Meet
- a. Regions automatically receive three (3) allocations, per event to the state meet for all events in ages 14 & under.
 - b. Additional allocations for 14 & under events are allowed based on total number of individuals registered by the region at the time of the region meet registration deadline of the current year.
 - 1. Each region must register a minimum of 1,000 individual participants prior to receiving additional allocations. For each 500 individuals registered thereafter, the region receives one additional allocation to the state meet.
 - 2. The State Office notifies regions of total allocations prior to the region meet.
 - c. In the event a region hosts another region's (out of region) regional meet, the visiting region will forfeit one of their allotted berths to the State meet to the hosting region.
- .08 Region Swim Commissioners/Meet Directors are responsible for certifying regional meet results, forwarding results in the required format for state entries, and verifying entries are received and are correct.
- 25.6 T.A.A.F. Summer Games of Texas State Meet
- .01 Meet entries are only accepted from the Regional Swim Commissioner/Regional Director/Meet Director or designee at the conclusion of the regional meet.
- a. All entries will follow the procedure as outlined in the region meet/coaches packet available on the website in March each year.
 - b. If entries are not received as required, it is the responsibility of the region to correct and send as requested.
 - c. Regions must submit entries by the posted deadline.
- .02 Regional Representative at the state swim meet
- a. The Regional Swim Commissioner/Director/Meet Director or designee must attend the state meet to verify entries and settle entry disputes for their respective region.
 - b. Requested changes to entries from the official regional entries submitted to the State require approval from the Regional designee at the meet and the State Commissioner.

- c. Regions without representation at the state meet will result in no changes to official regional entries. Participants, parents and/or coaches with disputes over officially submitted entries will be directed back to the appropriate Region or City representative.
- .03 Verification of Entries
- a. Once entries are received by the State, it is the responsibility of the Region to verify the entries prior to the seeding of the meet.
 - b. Regions are charged per athlete, per event and per relay event, based on the entries received. (MOP 4.5) Scratches at the state meet are included in the invoice.
 - c. Regions are responsible for state entry fees. The State Office requires one form of payment, per region prior to competing at the meet.
- .04 State Event limitations per athlete
- a. Ages 8 & under; 6 & under may compete in no more than three (3) total events, including relays.
 - b. Ages 9-10 may compete in no more than four (4) total events, including relays.
 - c. Ages 11-14 may compete in no more than four (4) individual events, plus two (2) relays.
 - d. Relays events – state relay athletes are the four (4) listed swimmers, plus no more than two (2) listed alternates. Any combination may swim.
 - e. Exception to event limitations: Swimmer may be listed as an alternate on any relay(s). Swimmers may scratch from one event to swim on the relay ONLY if a teammate listed on the relay is scratched from the meet. This change must be made prior to the start of the meet, or as approved by the State Swim Commissioner/Meet Director once the meet begins.
 - e. 15-17 may compete in no more than four (4) events, plus two (2) gender specific relays, plus the mixed relays (maximum of 9).
 - f. 18 & over may compete in unlimited events.
- .05 The State Meet is conducted as a timed final championship.
- .06 The schedule and order of events for the meet is determined by the State Commissioner and the hosting City.
- .07 State Meet Awards
- a. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded for first, second, and third place.
 - b. Ribbons are awarded for fourth through eighth place.
 - c. T.A.A.F. Swimming does not recognize a team high point.
- 25.7 T.A.A.F. Winter Games of Texas Swim Meet
- .01 Swimmers enter the meet via the protocol established by the State Office.
- .02 It is the responsibility of the entering athlete to verify his or her entry. Entry list and/or psych sheet is posted on-line. The deadline for verified corrections is Wednesday prior to the meet.
- .03 Winter Games of Texas event limitations per athlete:
- a. All ages are limited to three (3) individual events plus two (2) gender specific relays.
 - b. 15 & over may enter up to three (3) mixed relays in addition to above.
- .04 The Meet is conducted as a timed final championship.
- .05 T.A.A.F. does not designate team coaches for this Meet.

- .06 The schedule and order of events for the meet is determined by the State Commissioner and the hosting City.
 - .07 State Meet Awards
 - a. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded for first, second, and third place.
 - b. Ribbons are awarded for fourth through eighth place.
 - c. T.A.A.F. Swimming does not recognize a team high point.
- 25.8 The state commissioner may implement procedures to adjust the entry procedures for the state meets, protest fees, events, and meet operation procedures if the state commissioner deems it necessary to assure an effective meet for spectators and swimmers. The information is provided to the member/coaches in the state meet packet.