



Applications & Support

Accepting Applications

Deciding to accept an Application to swim the Channel is discretionary. Applicants will fall into two categories.

Tier 1: Those who have a long and successful history of marathon swimming

Tier 2: Those who are new to the sport or have limited experience in cold water, open ocean and nighttime events.

As safety is the primary concern for CCSF if a candidate falls into the Tier 2 category additional questioning is appropriate in the areas of:

- Temperatures endured and for how long.
- Nighttime swimming experience, in ocean and cold.
- Coaches or supporters who can provide additional information.
- Any prior experiences with or treatment for hypothermia.
- Understanding of hypothermia, passive vs. active warming treatment, etc.

The individual assigned to process the application has the authority ask additional questions of the swimmer. If they are uncomfortable asking such questions ask for a list of names of individuals willing to further question the applicant.

QUESTIONS FOR CATALINA CHANNEL SWIMMERS

(Tier 2 Review)

Swimmers who are planning an attempt to swim the Catalina Channel vary greatly in their experience, training and ability. It is helpful to the swimmer and the CCSF to conduct an interview with the swimmer as far in advance as possible to assess the swimmer's preparation and any potential issues the CCSF or the observer should know about. If this interview occurs months before the swim, it may identify problems with preparation early enough that they can be corrected. If it occurs the day before the swim, it can still help the observer to be alert to possible problems.

The following questions are presented as an example of the interviews I have conducted over the years. I prefer to do these interviews over the phone or in person rather than by email or letter, since often the manner and tone of a person's statements reveal as much as the actual words used. It's also faster and easier – the answers to some questions immediately suggest the answers to others. Highly experienced swimmers, who understand what it's all about, get only brief questions asking how their training is going and if they have any recent health issues. First timers are often surprised by some of the questions, which bring up issues they hadn't considered. They get the full treatment.

These questions are intended to help both the swimmer and the CCSF identify and possibly correct strengths and weaknesses in experience, training and logistical preparation on dry land, rather than on a rough night in the middle of the Catalina Channel.

David Clark

MOTIVATION

- 1) Why do you want to do this swim? What does it mean to you?

EXPERIENCE

- 1) Please tell me about your swimming experience throughout your life, both in the pool and open water.
- 2) Have you swum on swim teams? As an age group swimmer? As an adult? Please tell me about those experiences. When were they? What teams? For how long?
- 3) What's the longest swim you've ever done? When and where was that? How did you prepare? What was your time? How did it go?
- 4) What other long swims have you done?
- 5) What's the longest swim you've done *this year*? When and where was that? How did you prepare? What was your time? How did it go?
- 6) What other long swims have you done *this year*? When and where was that? How did you prepare? What was your time? How did it go?

TRAINING

- 1) Please describe your training program for this season.
- 2) Do you train alone, or with an organized team (age group, senior, high school, college or Masters)?
- 3) Do you have a coach?
- 4) Does your coach support your open water swimming plans?
- 5) If so, what plans have you and your coach made for this swim?
- 6) What's a typical training week for you?
- 7) How many days per week / what distances and times do you swim in the pool? Short course or long course?
- 8) If you did a freestyle set in the pool, 10 x 100 free, what would be your send-off interval? What times would you typically swim?
- 9) What open water training opportunities do you have available? Ocean, lake, river? How far away? What sorts of conditions are typical there? What range of water and air temperatures is typical there?
- 10) How many days per week / what distances and times do you swim in open water?
- 11) What times do you typically swim for a one mile swim in open water?
- 12) What pace per mile do you expect to hold on your Catalina Channel swim?
- 13) What stroke rate do you typically hold on long swims?
- 14) What stroke technique problems do you have?
- 15) What is your typical pattern as you get cold and tired?
- 16) Describe your training for swimming at night.
- 17) Have you read the CCSF swim rules? Do you have any questions about them?

FEEDING AND NUTRITION

- 1) What are your plans for feeding during your swim?
- 2) What foods do you use?
- 3) How much do you have at each feeding?
- 4) How often do you feed?
- 5) How does your support crew get the feedings to you?
- 6) During a swim, do you have trouble keeping feedings down? How do you cope with that?

MEDICAL

- 1) Are you currently under the care of a health care provider?
- 2) If so, are they aware of your plans to swim the Catalina channel, and do they support your plans?
- 3) Are you currently taking any medications? Does your health care provider foresee any problems caused by those medications?
- 4) Do you have any significant medical issues? Are you diabetic? Hypoglycemic? Do you have any metabolic diseases?
- 5) Do you have any psychological conditions that might affect your safety during an open water swim?
- 6) Do you have any form of heart or lung disease?
- 7) Do you have any shoulder or other orthopedic (bone, ligament, tendon and joint) problems? If so, what do you do to prevent or control the problem?

- 8) Have you had difficulty urinating during a long swim in the past? Are you able to overcome this difficulty?
- 9) Do you have any difficulties sleeping? How many hours do you usually sleep in a night?
- 10) What is your age?
- 11) Do you get seasick? What do you do to prevent or control that?
- 12) Do you have any other medical issues?

COLD TOLERANCE AND HYPOTHERMIA

- 1) Have you ever been hypothermic? Please describe that experience – the circumstances, how it was resolved, what you learned from it.
- 2) What was the coldest water temperature you've ever swum in? When and where was that? How far did you swim? How long did it take? How did it go?
- 3) What was the coldest water temperature you've swum in *this year*? When and where was that? How far did you swim? How long did it take? How did it go?
- 4) Would you say you are more tolerant of cold water than most other swimmers, or less tolerant, or about average?
- 5) How tall are you? How much do you weigh?
- 6) What specific training are you doing to prepare for the cold?

ESCORT BOAT

- 1) What escort boat do you plan to use? Have you booked a swim?
- 2) If you do not plan to use one of the pilots listed on the CCSF website, please describe the experience of the pilot you plan to use.
- 3) If you do not plan to use one of the pilots listed on the CCSF website, please describe the boat you plan to use.
- 4) When and where will you and your support crew meet the escort boat?

SUPPORT CREW

- 1) What support crew do you plan to use?
- 2) Will you have family members on board? Any children?
- 3) Will you have a coach on board?
- 4) Who will lead the support crew?
- 5) Do you plan to use kayakers / paddle boarders?
- 6) If so, describe their experience, both as kayakers and as swim escorts.
- 7) Describe the training you have done with your kayakers, including feedings.
- 8) How long will the paddler shifts be?
- 9) How do the kayakers plan to hand over from one paddler to the next?
- 10) What plans have your support crew made for bringing the necessary equipment, including appropriate clothing, food for the support crew, kayaks or paddle boards, lighting such as glow sticks, any equipment used to feed you, lifejackets (PFDs) and other safety equipment, etc?
- 11) Do you plan to use pace swimmers?
- 12) If so, when and how long will they swim with you?
- 13) Who will prepare your feedings?
- 14) How will your feedings be provided to you? By a kayaker / paddle boarder, or directly from the escort boat?
- 15) What is your plan for communicating with the support crew?

- 16) How will your support crew make sure that enough people are on deck at all times, while also encouraging people to get some rest when possible?
- 17) What preparations will your support crew make for seasickness?
- 18) Does any of your support crew have any significant medical issues?
- 19) Who on the boat best knows you, your swimming, your moods and concerns?

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- 1) How do your family and friends feel about your plans for this swim?
- 2) How do you balance the conflicting time demands of training and family?

OCCUPATION

- 1) What is your occupation?
- 2) How do you balance the conflicting time demands of training and work?

TRAVEL PLANS

- 1) How far in advance do you plan to arrive in the Los Angeles area?
- 2) Where will you stay?
- 3) Where will you train?
- 4) Do you plan to go over to Catalina on the escort boat, or separately?
- 5) What plans have you made for getting safely back to the hotel or home after everyone has had a long, tiring night and day on the water?

EMERGENCIES

- 1) In the event of an emergency, the captain of the escort boat will take whatever measures are necessary for the safety of the swimmer and all other people on board. Have you discussed possible emergencies and how to respond to them with your family and support crew?

CONCLUSION

- 1) Do you have any other questions or comments?

Tier 2 Swim Applications: Reviewers

If a candidate is considered a tier 2 swimmer, the person processing the applicant can and should ask for additional review.

The following five individuals are available for reply to tier 2 swimmers by phone:

Name	Phone Number	Email Address
Tina Neal		
Penny Dean		

Tier 2 Swimmer – Approval / Disapproval

Name: _____

Date: _____

City & State: _____

Results of Review and Suggested Action:

Tier 2 Reviewer: (Print Name) _____

Signed _____

Date _____

Fax to CCSF at: _____

Processing Applications

The application process is described in detail at: SwimCatalina.org There are several forms that must be completed. At the present time, all paperwork should be submitted prior to depositing funds.

- Funds must be received and verified prior to adding the candidate to the Swim / Observer calendar.
- All paperwork and funds must be received 45 days before the swim.
- Tier 2 processing must be completed by 31 days prior to the swim.

Incomplete Applications 45 days Prior to Swim Date

- If an application is not complete or funds have not been received 45 days prior to the requested swim date send the candidate an email stating his swim is no longer in process and CCSF will not assign an Observer until his package is complete.
- At this point the swimmer is wait-listed and CCSF will not guarantee the sanctioning of the event.

Incomplete Applications 30 days Prior to Swim Date

- If there is no communication from the wait listed swimmer thirty days prior to the requested event date, return all paperwork and their uncashed check by Priority Mail or other tractable postal method to the swimmer.

Cancellation of a Swim by the Swimmer

- Once an application is processed, if the swimmer cancels there is a \$150 non-refundable cancelation fee. CCSF will refund whatever the original application amount was minus \$150.
- Refunds should be noted and processed within 30 days.

- No refunds for cancellations fourteen or fewer days before a swim.

Application Check List

Name: _____ Swim Date: _____

45th Day: _____

- Completed Application
- Verify correct payment amount is enclosed
- CCSF Waiver of Liability
- USMS Waiver
- Confirm Membership Fees are Paid
- Plan your Swim, Swim your Plan Form
- Summary of Previous Swims
- Medical Form received and approved
- Tier 1 Approval or Tier 2 Questioning completed
- Emails Confirmation of Approval or Denial

If Approved

- Pay USA Swimming Sanction Fees
- Verify Escort Vessel is Contracted
- Notify Support for Observer

Support

- Support Maintains a list of all Observers, Kayakers, Paddlers and other volunteers, Information maintained should include:

Position Qualified for: Observer; Assistant Observer; Kayaker; Paddler; Support Crew. Please verify spelling of names since this record may be used on banquet and website information.

Last Name	First Name	Home #	Cellular	Email	Observer	Asst. Obs.	Kayaker	Obs. Waiver

Duties Schedule:

- Weekly: Check Support Email at: Support@SwimCatalina.org ID & PW
- Respond to all email in 5 days or less
- Forward list of Volunteer Kayakers/Paddler to swimmer upon request
- Post Swim on Google Calendar ID & PW
- Assigns Official Observer and Assistant Observer
- Request Assistance if needed
- Updates Master Calendar

- Post Observers and Support Crew

Prior to Swim:

- Provide Swimmer with Observers Name & Contact Information
- Provide Observer with Swimmers Name & Contact Information
- Provide Observer with direction of swim & Boat Name
- Get a list of people on that will be on board
- Verify names of Paddlers and support crew
- Verify Departure time from Dock
- Verify the Observer has a copy of the completed Swim Your Plan form
- Verify Swimmer has a current check list of supplies required to leave the dock

Swimmers are encouraged to present the Official Observer with a sealed envelope containing medical history and physician contact information. This envelope will remain sealed and be returned unopened to the swimmer at the conclusion of the swim. In case of a medical emergency this sealed envelop will be given to paramedics and/or attending medical professionals.

Upon Completion of every swim, observers notify the head of Support when the boat is safely back at the dock with all crew swimmer, crew and boat has arrived back at the dock along with the presents and condition of all on Board.

**On a monthly basis Support emails the CCSF Board a list of swims attempted; swims completed; time completed; any unusual incidents the Board should be aware of including issues with swimmer or issues with Observers and or CCSF locally available crew.

The person head of Support should attend all formal Observer Training during the month of May. Additional Training may be scheduled during other times of the year. The person in charge of Support should make every effort to attend and meet individuals being trained.

SAMPLE: CONFIRMATION LETTER

Dear Swimmer,

As your Catalina Channel swim date is rapidly approaching, the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation would like to advise you as to the official observers assigned to your swim. Your observers and their contact information is as follows:

Official Observer: _____ XXX-XXX-XXXX
Asst Observer: _____ XXX-XXX-XXXX
Crew: _____ XXX-XXX-XXXX

Please advise your observers what time your support boat will be departing from the dock on (Date). Please be sure to complete your "Plan Your Swim and Swim Your Plan" form, available online at: <http://www.swimcatalina.org/Forms2009.pdf> and give it to your observer before departing the dock. For your reference, I've attached a copy of the "Day of the Swim Checklist" to ensure all essential equipment and documentation is available on the day of your swim.

Boat location, contact information and map for support crew:

Boat Name:
Address:
Reservation #:
Website:
Mapsite Address:

If you have any questions prior to your swim, please feel free to contact me at 619-303-0423.

On behalf of the Catalina Channel Swimming Federation, we wish you the best of luck on your Catalina Channel crossing!

Sincerely,

Support Coordinator
Catalina Channel Swimming Federation



Day of the Swim Pre-Departure Checklist

Requirements

Prior to leaving the Dock, you must have a coach/support crew on board

Prior to leaving the Dock, you must have a minimum of 12 large green glow sticks

Prior to leaving the Dock, you must give your Observer a completed copy of
"Plan you Swim/Swim your Plan"

Your Swim is in Risk of being Canceled if:

There are poor weather conditions and you do not have a competent kayaker.

Your Swim is in Risk of being Canceled if:

If you do not have support crew to prepare and assist with feeding

Your Swim is in Risk of being Canceled if:

If you do not have at least one support crew awake and on deck

Maintaining Escort Vessel Safety Equipment

AED's are collected the end of every season, generally in December after the last swim. They are certified by: between January and February so they are tested and available by March 1st in anticipation of any early swims.

The person in charge of AED's should check with Boat Captains monthly to check to make sure AED's are complete and that the green status indicator light will display. Sources of information and supplies for the AED are:

AEDSuperstore, 800-544-0048, 1800 US Hwy 51 N, Woodruff, WI 54568.

A check sheet in the following format will be kept with each AED in a waterproof sleeve to record the dates that status and supplies are verified.

Date Checked	By: Name	Light Indicator:	Pads	Batteries	Throw Bag	

* Add this procedure to the Observer Training Manual.

Safety Equipment Check Sheet

Date Checked	By: Name	Light Indicator:	Pads	Batteries	Throw Bag	