

COACH INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The "USA Swimming Coach Incentive Program" is intended to help ensure continued success in international competition by identifying and supporting those coaches who are preparing our athletes for medal winning performances as well as those who are providing a foundation for success in the critical development years of our international medalists.

PROGRAM BENEFITS

1. Provides incentive for our coaches to put a higher priority on preparing our swimmers for major international competition.
2. Encourages our "pathway" coaches to stay in club coaching.
3. Encourages our club coaches to lay the foundation and develop training plans focused on career results.
4. Provides incentive for all of our coaches to put a greater emphasis on long course meters training.
5. Encourages more cooperative and effective interaction between our club and college coaches.

METHOD

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1st, 2nd, or 3rd place in an individual Olympic event in the Operation Gold meet of the year. For 2026 the Operation Gold meet for pool and open water competition is the 2026 Pan Pacific Championships in Irvine, California (Pool) and Long Beach, California (Open Water). All eligibility requirements established below must be met at the time of the medal winning performance by the athlete.

ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

- A. Primary Coach: the coach who is the coach of the athlete at the time of the medal winning performance at the Operation Gold Competition. The coach must have been coaching the athlete for at least 90 consecutive days within a 24-month period prior to the medal winning performance at the Operation Gold Competition.
- B. University Coach: the Head Coach of the University program who coached the athlete during his/her years at University. (If a University Coach is the Primary Coach they may not receive credit twice. The University Coach must have coached the athlete for two college seasons at the time of the medal winning performance at the Operation Gold competition in order to receive University Coach credit)
- C. Developmental Coach: the coach (es) who provided the training foundation for these athletes during a minimum of 24 consecutive months of the "critical development years" (ages 11-18)
- D. Post Developmental: any coach who has coached the athlete for at least 24 consecutive months from age 18

Note: A maximum of four coaches are eligible to receive credit for any performance. If more than four coaches qualify for funds, the developmental or university coach (es) who coached the athlete for the shortest amount of time would not receive funding. Coaches and athletes will be asked for the dates they worked together. If there is a discrepancy regarding the dates the coach was the primary coach of the athlete in that coaching category, USA Swimming will research using Membership records and reserves the right to request more detailed information from athletes and coaches. USA Swimming will make the final decision based on the research it conducts and the information it has received. To the extent that a final decision is based solely on interviews with, or the recollections of, the athlete and coaches involved, USA Swimming will choose the position which is supported by a majority of the persons interviewed, where possible.

DISBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

Eligible primary coaches will receive: four shares of funding for a gold medal performance, two shares for a silver medal and one share for a bronze medal. If a primary coach who qualifies for a share of the funding coached the medal winning athlete for five years or more at any time in the athlete's career (consecutive), he/she will receive an additional one share*. The available dollars will be divided by the total number of shares to determine the value of each share. The amount of the Coach Incentive money that a coach may receive for any given performance may not exceed the medal money available to the athlete.

*coaches who have previously received a five year bonus share, and meet all other established requirements, will be grandfathered in to receive a five year bonus share even if their five years coaching the athlete were not consecutive.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. Only current active coaches who are members of USA Swimming in good standing (including without limitation completing all background checks and having all current coaches certifications) are eligible to receive financial awards.
2. To be eligible for shares as a coach within one or more of the categories listed above, a coach must be the primary coach – he/she must have been primarily responsible for the design and “on deck” implementation of the training program for the required period of time. A swimmer cannot have more than one primary coach at any given time.
3. The Head Coach of the University Program will receive funding for performance of all athletes in his/her Program. The Head Coach may decide to disburse funds appropriately.
4. For club coaches the money will be distributed to the coach who wrote the workouts and was the primary coach on deck.

2026