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**CHAMPIONS**  
SWIM SERIES

*Updated 16 on May 2019  
(Page 6)*

**EVENT SUMMONS**

**31 May - 01 June 2019**

***INDIANAPOLIS, USA***



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## INTRODUCTION

From 2019, elite swimming stars will have the opportunity to shine in a brand new FINA competition, the “FINA Champions Swim Series”, a circuit gathering the top athletes of the Sport. With an original competition format including only finals, the Series aims to be a milestone in the Aquatic Sports calendar.

The main goals of this new international gathering are to give high-level swimmers increased attention and additional occasions to compete, thus generating stronger global interest to the sport of swimming.

The Series will be an exceptional showcase for the sport and its top swimmers. The competition will be held in 50-metre pools and together with innovative sports presentation and entertainment, it will comprise events of 50m, 100m and 200m in freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke and butterfly (as well as the 400m free and 200m IM), in addition to relay races.

The athletes’ participation in this exclusive Series is on an invitation-only basis, comprising the Olympic and World medallists, the current World Record holder and the best in the world rankings in each discipline. Attractive prize money will be paid in each individual race, with overall prize money pool over 4.2 million US dollars.

With an extensive and well-developed range of broadcast partners throughout the globe, alongside digital distribution platforms like FINALIVE.TV, FINA is uniquely placed to deliver an unforgettable circuit of the “FINA Champions Swim Series” to the fans, followers and our potential new stars.

In 2019, the inaugural edition of the FINA Champions Swim Series will be hosted by:

***Guangzhou, China, on April 27-28;***  
***Budapest, Hungary, on May 11-12;***  
***Indianapolis, USA, on May 31-June 1.***

## I. EVENT INFORMATION

### 1. Host, Place and Date of Competitions

The third leg of the FINA Champions Swim Series 2019 will be held in Indianapolis, USA:

**Friday, 31 May 2019:**

Competition – Day 1

**Saturday, 01 June 2019:**

Competition – Day 2

The hosts for these event, the USA Swimming and the City of Indianapolis.

### 2. Indianapolis

With an estimated population of almost 850'000, Indianapolis ("Indy") is the capital of the state of Indiana and is by far one of the country's most livable big cities. Indianapolis is the largest city in Indiana and 14th largest in the U.S. Indianapolis has a quality about it that makes even the heart of a bustling downtown feel like home. Visitors are drawn from all over the globe to enjoy our top-notch professional sports venues, a thriving convention industry and numerous cultural attractions. And when they arrive, they too experience the character and hospitality that make Indianapolis special.

Indiana has long been synonymous with sports. For a century, Indianapolis has hosted the Indianapolis 500 race, the largest single-day sporting event in the world. For decades, Indiana has been home to professional sports teams including the Indiana Pacers, Indianapolis Colts, Indiana Fever, Indianapolis Indians, and a vast array of other sports franchises.

Since 1979, Indiana Sports Corp. has been the driving force in the region's sports initiative, one that features sports-based entities headquartered in Indianapolis, spectacular venues, and a focus on hosting marquee sporting events.

In addition to hosting many national and international swimming, diving, synchronized swimming, and water polo competitions at the Indiana University Natatorium, Indianapolis was the host city for the very successful 2004 FINA World Swimming Championships (25m), which witnessed over 10'000 spectators in Conseco Fieldhouse.



### 3. Organising Committee

The USA Swimming has established the Local Organising Committee (LOC) of the 2019 FINA Champions Swim Series – Indianapolis (**2019 FINA Champions Swim Series**), which shall be in charge of the preparation and organisation of the competitions under the control and supervision of FINA. The participants and the guests of the FINA Champions Swim Series – Indianapolis 2019 required to communicate with LOC, should address their queries according to the details below:

#### **2019 FINA Champions Swim Series**

c/o USA Swimming

Attention: Dean Ekeren, National Events Director  
Address: 1 Olympic Plaza, Colorado Springs, Colorado USA 80909  
  
Tel: +1 719 3315005  
Email: [dekeren@usaswimming.org](mailto:dekeren@usaswimming.org)

### 4. Competition Venue

The Indiana University (IU) Natatorium, affectionately known as “the Nat”, located on the campus of Indiana University/Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) in downtown Indianapolis, was completed in 1982 at a cost of USD\$21.5 million.

The IU Natatorium has 3 pools: an 8-lane, 2.5m deep 50m competition pool; a 6-lane 50m warm-up pool; and an 8-lane short course (25Y) warm-up pool.

The main competition pool has been proclaimed one of the fastest pools in the world, with 121 American and 18 World records having been broken here. Athletes from around the world have competed at the IU Natatorium. In addition to numerous U.S. National Championships and U.S. Open Championships, the U.S. Olympic Team Trials were held at the Nat in 1984, 1992, 1996 and 2000. The names of all the team members who have qualified for an Olympic Team here are inscribed on the south wall of the Natatorium. The venue also hosted the 2017 FINA World Junior Championships.

2 men’s and 2 women’s locker rooms exist adjacent to the competition pool with ample locker space. Lockers for use by officials are located in the warm-up pool area adjacent to and north of the competition pool. In early 2017, the venue completed a USD\$20 million renovation, keeping the venue as one of the top indoor pools in the United States.



## 5. General Programme

The competitions will be staged over 2 days with direct final sessions only.

Wednesday, 29 May 2019:

**Thursday, 30 May 2019:**

**Friday, 31 May 2019:**

**Saturday, 01 June 2019:**

Sunday, 02 June 2019:

Arrival

**Technical Meeting** (start at 17:00, GMT -4)

**Competition – Day 1** (start at 19:00, GMT -4)

**Competition – Day 2** (start at 19:00, GMT -4)

Departure

The competitions will be staged over 2 days with direct final sessions only.

### Day 1 - Friday, 31 May (start at 19:00, GMT -4)

- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. 200m Backstroke, Women   | 9. 100m Freestyle, Women     |
| 2. 200m Butterfly, Men      | 10. 200m IM, Men             |
| 3. 100m Butterfly, Women    | 11. 50m Breaststroke, Women  |
| 4. 50m Freestyle, Men       | 12. 100m Breaststroke, Men   |
| 5. 200m Breaststroke, Women | 13. 50m Backstroke, Women    |
| 6. 100m Backstroke, Men     | 14. 200m Freestyle, Men      |
| 7. 400m Freestyle, Women    | 15. 4x100m Freestyle, Mixed* |
| 8. 50m Butterfly, Men       |                              |

### Day 2 - Saturday, 01 June (start at 19:00, GMT -4)

- |                           |                              |
|---------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. 200m Backstroke, Men   | 9. 100m Freestyle, Men       |
| 2. 200m Butterfly, Women  | 10. 200m IM, Women           |
| 3. 100m Butterfly, Men    | 11. 50m Breaststroke, Men    |
| 4. 50m Freestyle, Women   | 12. 100m Breaststroke, Women |
| 5. 200m Breaststroke, Men | 13. 50m Backstroke, Men      |
| 6. 100m Backstroke, Women | 14. 200m Freestyle, Women    |
| 7. 400m Freestyle, Men    | 15. 4x100m Medley, Mixed*    |
| 8. 50m Butterfly, Women   |                              |

\* Relays are subject to confirmation, and dependent on participation.

Further details on competition running order including the events, entertainment programme and the awards ceremonies, will be available at the Technical Meeting. The format of the competitions consider interviews with race winners/stars after each race.

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## II. TEAM INFORMATION

### 1. Registration Procedure

All Registrations and Entries shall take place through the FINA General Management System (FINA GMS) which can be accessed by <https://data.fina.org>. National Federations must use their usual login details to access the system. For registration help and assistance please contact: [aquaticsdb@fina.org](mailto:aquaticsdb@fina.org)

Please note that the registration for the FINA Champions Swim Series – Indianapolis 2019 – is open until **20 May 2019** (23:59 GMT). All participants must be registered at this date.

We highly advise federations who need visa to register their athletes as soon as possible in the FINA GMS in order to receive the visa assistance from the Organising Committee.

### 2. Training Facilities

Training will be provided from Wednesday 29th May at the competition venue. Training will follow the “Open Training System”, therefore, each team may train at any time within the specified training time for an unlimited duration while respecting the following distribution in the competition pool at all times:

The Indiana University Natatorium includes:

- Competition Pool - 50m x 8 lane (3m deep)
- Training Pool – 50m x 6 lane (1.5-2m deep)
- Diving Pool - 25m wide (4m deep)

From Wednesday 29th May through Saturday 1st June the competition will be available for training from 09:00 – 20:00 hrs.

### 3. Technical Meeting

The Technical Meeting will be held Thursday, 30th May at 17:00 hrs at the JW Marriott Hotel, 10 S. West Street, Indianapolis, Indiana.

The Technical Meeting will provide updated sport specific information for all coaches and Team Leaders. All swimmers must be represented at the meeting because there will be a review regarding the competition procedures, athletes’ flows, warm-up procedures, etc. The Technical Meeting will cover all aspects about the execution of the FINA Champions Swim Series and include the following issues:

- Pre-Competition procedures
- Competition procedures
- Post-competition procedures

*The Technical Meeting will provide updated sport specific information for all coaches and Team Leaders. All swimmers must be represented at the meeting because there will be a review regarding the competition procedures, athletes’ flows, warm-up procedures, etc.*

At the meeting Team Leaders must check the start lists, as well as all information related to their athletes including spelling of the athlete’s name (first name, last name, date of birth, etc.). No corrections or changes will be allowed after the Technical Meeting. Withdrawals after conclusion of the Technical Meeting will be fined according to FINA Rules.

#### 4. Doping Control

The conduct of the doping control will be the responsibility of the United States Anti-Doping Association (USADA) and one or more persons appointed by the FINA Bureau. A selection of competitors to be tested during the FINA competition shall be decided by the Doping Control Commission at the competition. All participating competitors shall be considered for doping control selection.

#### 5. Traveling to the United States / Visas

USA Swimming and the Organising Committee for the FINA Champions Series in Indianapolis are committed to providing international sports leaders, athletes and officials with first-rate, personalized visa and entry assistance. The following pages provide important information for prospective travelers to the United States. If you require a travel visa to enter the United States, please begin the process as soon as possible! USA Swimming will facilitate an entry visa to the United States for all participants and coordinate all the required procedures upon receipt of required documentation to the FINA GMS System. Should you have any questions regarding the visa and entry process or require additional assistance please contact our visa assistance team at [visas@usaswimming.org](mailto:visas@usaswimming.org).

**Last date to accept request for the Visa Assistance is 10<sup>th</sup> of May 2019 at 23:59 (GMT)**

Please note that traveler who is transiting into or through any third country might need the relevant visa to enter that country, thus he/she should be solely responsible for obtaining such visa and any other required documents.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:**

For your travel you should have a **valid passport with an expiry date not less than six months after your expected departure.**

All invited persons applying for a visa to attend the FINA Champions Swim Series are required to pay appropriate official fees at the time of their application. The visa application fee will be reimbursed only against original receipt, proof of payment. For avoidance of doubt no additional expenses related to the visa application, such as tourist agency fee, will be covered.

The consular officer has the sole authority to issue or refuse a visa in accordance with regulations that have been established by Congress. The consular officer's decision cannot be overruled. There is no formal appeal process for a visa refusal.

If your visa is refused, please contact [abryant@usaswimming.org](mailto:abryant@usaswimming.org) immediately with the reason for refusal. It is possible that with additional information the refusal may be reconsidered and the applicant may reapply.

Further details on requirements for visa to United States can be found in Annex 1.

**Please contact USA Swimming at [visas@usaswimming.org](mailto:visas@usaswimming.org) for assistance or questions with the visa process.**

#### 6. Travel to Indianapolis

The LOC will be providing transportation for those arriving at Indianapolis International Airport.

Indianapolis International Airport (IATA: IND, ICAO: KIND, FAA LID: IND) is located seven miles (11 km) that is only 15-minute drive from the heart of downtown Indianapolis.



The Indianapolis International Airport offers more than 130 departures per day [or more than 250 arrivals and departures per day, linking Indianapolis with nonstop flights to 48 destinations in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

## **7. Accommodation**

Accommodation for all invited swimmers and national federation officials will be arranged at the official headquarters hotel, the JW Marriott, at 10 S. West Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204, USA.

The hotel is located 23 km from the Indianapolis International Airport, and less than 1km from the competition venue.

The costs of full-board accommodation (including breakfast, lunch, and dinner) will be provided at the hotel for a maximum of 4 nights, with check-in 28th May, and check-out on 2nd June.

The confirmation of accommodation has to be sent to the following contact:

Mr. Dean Ekeren (+1 719 331 5005): [dekeren@usaswimming.org](mailto:dekeren@usaswimming.org)

## **8. Local Transportation**

The LOC will provide pickup and sendoff service for the participants and officials of the FINA Champions Swim Series who arrive to and leave from Indianapolis International Airport.

The service will be provided based on travel details submitted through the FINA GMS.

During the days of the competitions the special-purpose vehicle and shuttle bus services will be provided between official hotel and competition venue. Further details regarding local transportation service will be available upon arrival in Indianapolis.

## **9. Travel & Accommodation Assistance to Invited Athletes**

Information has been communicated directly to each National Federation Member of FINA and can be consulted further by contacting the FINA Office:

Attention: Mr. Cornel Marculescu, Executive Director

Address: FINA Office / Ch. De Bellevue 24a/b / 1006 Lausanne / Switzerland

Phone: +41 21 310 47 10

Fax: +41 21 312 66 10

Email: [sportsdep@fina.org](mailto:sportsdep@fina.org)

## ANNEX 1

### TRAVELING TO THE UNITED STATES / VISAS

USA Swimming and the Organising Committee for the FINA Champions Series in Indianapolis are committed to providing international sports leaders, athletes and officials with first-rate, personalized visa and entry assistance. The following pages provide important information for prospective travellers to the United States. ***If you require a travel visa to enter the United States, please begin the process as soon as possible!*** USA Swimming will facilitate an entry visa to the United States for all participants and coordinate all the required procedures upon receipt of required documentation to the FINA GMS System. Should you have any questions regarding the visa and entry process or require additional assistance please contact our visa assistance team at [visas@usaswimming.org](mailto:visas@usaswimming.org).

#### **DO I REQUIRE A VISA TO TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES?**

To determine if you require a visa to travel to the United States, please review the instructions below or visit the U.S. Department of State's [Visa Wizard](#).

A visa will be required of all visitors to enter the United States with the exception of the nations of Canada, Bermuda and countries that are part of the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). Currently 38 countries participate in the VWP:

Andorra	France	Liechtenstein	Singapore
Australia	Germany	Lithuania	Slovakia
Austria	Greece	Luxembourg	Slovenia
Belgium	Hungary	Malta	Spain
Brunei	Iceland	Monaco	Sweden
Chile	Ireland	Netherlands	Switzerland
Czech Republic	Italy	New Zealand	Taiwan
Denmark	Japan	Norway	United Kingdom*
Estonia	Korea, Republic of	Portugal	
Finland	Latvia	San Marino	

*\*To be eligible to travel under the VWP, British citizens must have the unrestricted right of permanent abode in England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man.*

As of 21 January 2016, the following travellers who have traditionally been eligible to travel and enter the U.S. through the VWP will need to obtain a U.S. visitor visa:

- Citizens of VWP countries who have travelled to or been present in Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria or Yemen, on or after 1 March 2011.
- Dual citizens of VWP countries who are also nationals of Iran, Iraq, Sudan or Syria.

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Though these citizens are no longer eligible to travel under the VWP (even if they had previously been granted Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) approval), they are still welcome to enter the U.S. with a valid visitor visa, which can be obtained using the regular process at U.S. Embassies or Consulates.

For additional information on the Visa Waiver Program, please refer to **Section B** below. If you require a visa to travel to the United States, please refer to **Section A** below.

### **SECTION A: I REQUIRE A VISA TO TRAVEL TO THE UNITED STATES**

#### **Application Process**

*Q? When should I initiate the application process?*

Apply early! Although the majority of applications are processed and ready to pick up within a few business days, some applications will require administrative processing. Please apply at least 3 months before you plan to travel.

The wait times for appointments by post are available at the [U.S. Department of State travel site](#).

*Q? How do I apply for a visa?*

- Complete the online Non-immigrant Visa Application Form DS-160.
- Print the application confirmation page and bring to your interview.
- Upload your photo while completing the online Form DS-160. Your photo must be in the format explained in the [Photograph Requirements](#).
- Schedule an interview appointment. Appointments should be scheduled as soon as possible. For country specific instructions and information, please consult [usembassy.gov](#).

\*If there are no interview appointments available prior to the date of the meeting or event, please confirm the earliest appointment available and notify [abryant@usaswimming.org](mailto:abryant@usaswimming.org) immediately. By confirming the earliest appointment available, the applicant is considered to be entered into the U.S. Department of State network.

*Q? Do all non-immigrant visa applicants have to come to the Embassy for an interview?*

Yes, for most applicants. There are only a few exceptions to the interview requirement. The following applicants generally do not have to appear in person:

- Applicants who are renewing their visa may be eligible for the [Interview Waiver Program](#).
- Applicants for A1, A2 (official travellers on central government business), C2, C3 (central government officials in transit on central government business) or G1, G2, G3, G4 (central government officials traveling in connection with an international organization, or employees of an international organization).
- Children under 14 years of age at the date of the initial visa interview in the Embassy or Consulate if either of the parents have a valid non-immigrant visa.
- Applicants over 80.

*Q? I have a non-immigrant visa that will expire soon and I would like to renew it. Do I need to go through the entire visa application process again?*

Yes, unless you are eligible to apply using the [Interview Waiver Program](#).

#### **Preparing for Your Interview**

*Q? How should I prepare for my interview appointment?*

Gather and prepare the following required documents before your visa interview:

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- Ensure your passport is valid for travel to the United States. Many passports must be valid for at least 6 months after your planned departure from the United States unless exempted by [country specific agreements](#).
- Print your Non-immigrant Visa Application, DS-160 Form confirmation page.
- Print your application fee payment receipt, if you are required to pay before your interview.
- Upload your photo while completing the online Form DS-160. If the photo upload fails, the applicant must bring one printed photo to your interview. Your photo must be in the format explained in the [Photograph Requirements](#).
- Additional documentation may be required: Review the instructions for how to apply for a visa on the website of the [embassy or consulate](#) where you will apply. Additional documents may be requested to establish if you are qualified. For example, additional requested documents may include evidence of:
  - o The purpose of your trip.
  - o Your intent to depart the United States after your trip.
  - o Your employment and/or your family ties may be sufficient to show the purpose of your trip and your intent to return to your home country. If you cannot cover all the costs for your trip, you may show evidence that another person will cover some or all costs for your trip.

Please obtain a new passport before your interview if:

- Your passport expires in less than 6 months after the time you enter the U.S. unless exempted by country specific agreements.
- The film on the biographic data pages of your passport (i.e. page with your photo and back page with your parents' information) is peeling, or
- Your passport is otherwise torn, damaged, mutilated or has been washed or laundered.

*Q? Do I require an official letter of invitation?*

Official letters of invitation are not required, but are strongly recommended. Please request an invitation letter from the OC.

*Q? Is there anything I should know about attending my visa interview?*

During your visa interview, a consular officer will determine whether you are qualified to receive a visa. You will need to establish that you meet the requirements under U.S. law to receive the category of visa for which you are applying. Ink-free, digital fingerprint scans will be taken as part of your application process. Fingerprints are usually taken during your interview, but this varies based on location.

After your visa interview, your application may require further administrative processing. You will be informed by the consular officer if further processing is necessary for your application. Most administrative processing is resolved within 60 days of the visa interview.

When the visa is approved, you may pay a visa issuance fee if applicable to your nationality, and will be informed how your passport with visa will be returned to you. Review the [visa processing time](#) to learn how soon your passport with visa will generally be ready for pick-up or delivery by the courier.

### **About My Visa**

*Q? How do I read and understand my visa?*

As soon as you receive your visa, please check to make sure all your personal information printed on the visa is correct. If any of the information on your visa does not match the information in your passport or is otherwise incorrect, please contact the issuing authority (i.e. the U.S. Embassy) immediately.

The expiration date of your visa is the last day you may use the visa to enter the United States. It does not indicate how long you may stay in the United States. Your stay is determined by the

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Department of Homeland Security at your port of entry. As long as you comply with the Department of Homeland Security's decision on the conditions of your stay, you should have no problem.

*Q? My visa was printed incorrectly. What do I do?*

If you think your visa was printed incorrectly, please email [abryant@usaswimming.org](mailto:abryant@usaswimming.org) and explain why you think there is an error.

*Q? My visa will expire while I am in the United States. Will this be an issue for me?*

No. You may stay in the U.S. for the period of time and conditions authorized by the Department of Homeland Security officer when you arrived in the U.S., which will be noted on the I-94, even if your visa expires during your stay.

Further information about understanding your visa can be found by visiting visa FAQs.

**Entering the United States**

*Q? What will happen when I enter the United States?*

Upon granting entry to the United States at the port of entry, the Customs and Border Protection officer will stamp the travel document of each arriving non-immigrant traveller. The admission stamp will show the date of admission, class of admission and the duration of admission. Upon arrival, travellers will also receive a flier alerting them to visit [cbp.gov/I94](http://cbp.gov/I94) for their admission record information. This online record replaces the paper I-94 form. VVWP travellers receive Form 1-94W. On this form, the officer records either a date or "D/S" (duration of status). If your I-94 records a specific date, then that is the date by which you must leave the United States. A visa does not guarantee entry into the United States, but allows a foreign citizen coming from abroad to travel to a U.S. port of entry and request permission to enter the United States. The Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officials have authority to permit or deny admission to the United States, and determine how long a traveller may stay.

*Q? What if my request for a visa is refused?*

The consular officer has the sole authority to issue or refuse a visa in accordance with regulations that have been established by Congress. The consular officer's decision cannot be overruled. There is no formal appeal process for a visa refusal.

If your visa is refused, please contact [abryant@usaswimming.org](mailto:abryant@usaswimming.org) immediately with the reason for refusal. It is possible that with additional information the refusal may be reconsidered and the applicant may reapply.

**SECTION B: I AM FROM A VISA WAIVER PROGRAM COUNTRY**

**Travelers from Visa Waiver Program Countries**

International travellers seeking to travel to the United States without a visa, who are nationals of VWP countries, should review the following important information on:

- 1) Traveller passport requirements under the VWP, and
- 2) Electronic submission of the ESTA form in advance of travel.

**Passport Requirements**

Your passport must meet the following requirements for VWP travel:

- **6-Month Validity.** Many passports must be valid for at least 6 months after your planned departure from the United States unless exempted by [country specific agreements](#).

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ANNEX 1

- **Machine-Readable:** A Machine-Readable Passport contains two lines of text with numbers and chevrons (<<<) at the bottom of the personal information page with the passport bearer's picture.
- **E-Passport:** The passport must be an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. As of April 1, 2016, all travellers must have an e-passport to use the VWP. An e-Passport, denoted by the symbol, is an enhanced secure passport with an embedded electronic chip. E-Passports are issued by the proper passport issuing authority and must meet international standards for securing and storing information corresponding to the passport and bearer.

***Applying for the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA)***

In order to travel without a visa on the VWP, you must have authorization through ESTA prior to boarding a U.S. bound air or sea carrier. ESTA is the Department of Homeland Security, Customs and Border Protection's automated web-based system to determine eligibility to travel without a visa to the United States for tourism or business. Visit the [ESTA website](#) for more detailed information and to apply.

There is a US \$14 fee for ESTA registration. The fee can be paid online using a debit card or any of the following credit cards: Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover. Third parties (travel agents, family members, etc.) can pay your ESTA fee for you if you do not have the correct type of credit card. If the ESTA registration is denied, the fee is only US \$4.

*Q? What information is needed in order to complete the ESTA application?*

The traveller must provide, in English, biographical data including name, birth date and passport information. The traveller will also be required to answer VWP eligibility questions regarding communicable diseases, arrests and convictions for certain crimes, and past history of visa revocation or deportation, among others.

*Q? What should I do if my ESTA application is not approved?*

If an ESTA application is refused and the traveller wishes to continue with the trip, the traveller will be required to apply for a non-immigrant visa at a U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

*Q? Can I apply for ESTA without specific U.S. travel plans?*

Yes. VWP travellers are not required to have specific plans to travel to the United States before they apply for ESTA. If a traveller's destination address in the U.S. is unknown at the time of application, the traveller should enter the name of the hotel or approximate location he or she intends to visit. Travelers may update this information when their plans are finalized, but they will not be required to update their destination addresses or itineraries should they change after their ESTA has been approved. The Department of Homeland Security recommends that ESTA applications are submitted as early as possible, as soon as, or even before travel is planned. ESTA will accept applications from last-minute and emergency travellers.

***Traveling Under the Visa Waiver Program***

*Q? Am I eligible for ESTA if I am traveling on a private aircraft?*

If you are otherwise eligible to travel on an ESTA but are traveling on a non-U.S. corporation private aircraft you will require a visa.

*Q? If I travel to the United States without ESTA, what happens?*

VWP travellers who have not obtained approval through ESTA should expect to be denied boarding on any air carrier bound for the United States. If you are allowed to board, you can expect to encounter significant delays and possible denial of admission at the U.S. port of entry (i.e. arrival airport). ESTA registration usually only takes a few minutes to complete and authorization often arrives in seconds. The ESTA is valid for 2 years, unless the traveller's passport expires within that two-year period. In those cases, ESTA validity is limited to the passport's validity.

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ANNEX 1

*Q? Do I need to apply for ESTA if I am in Canada or Mexico and want to drive to the United States?*

If you are a citizen of a country that participates in the VWP and you enter the U.S. by land from Mexico or Canada, you are only required to complete the paper I-94W form at the land-border crossing. ESTA is currently required for air and cruise ship travel only.

Note: VWP citizens do not need an ESTA to travel on the ferries between Vancouver and Victoria, British Columbia and Washington State. They are treated as a land-border port.

If entering by sea, as long as it is a cruise ship, you will need to apply for ESTA (check the [ESTA website](#) for approved cruise lines). If you are coming in a private-sailing vessel, ESTA is not an issue since you must have a visa to arrive in the U.S. by that mode. VWP is not approved for travel to the U.S. on a pleasure boat.

### VISA CONTACT INFORMATION AND ONLINE REFERENCES

- USA Swimming email: [visas@usaswimming.org](mailto:visas@usaswimming.org)
- Visa Wizard: [travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/visa-wizard.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/visa-wizard.html)
- Visa Wait & Processing Times: [travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/wait-times.html/](http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/wait-times.html/)
- DS-160 Form: [ceac.state.gov/genniv/](http://ceac.state.gov/genniv/)
- Photograph Requirements: [travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/photos.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/en/general/photos.html)
- U.S. Embassies & Consulates: [travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html](http://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html)
- Interview Waiver Program: [ustraveldocs.com/in/in-niv-visarenew.asp](http://ustraveldocs.com/in/in-niv-visarenew.asp)
- Country-Specific Agreements (6-month Validity):  
[cbp.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Six%20Month%20Club%20Update\\_0.pdf](http://cbp.gov/sites/default/files/documents/Six%20Month%20Club%20Update_0.pdf)
- Visa FAQs: [travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/frequently-asked-questions/about-visas-the-basics.html#2](http://travel.state.gov/content/visas/english/general/frequently-asked-questions/about-visas-the-basics.html#2)
- Arrival/Departure Forms: I-94 and I-94W: <https://www.cbp.gov/travel/international-visitors/i-94-instructions>
- ESTA: <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/esta/>

Please contact USA Swimming at [visas@usaswimming.org](mailto:visas@usaswimming.org) for assistance or questions with the visa process.