

Sample YMCA Aquatic Policy

It is the policy of the Anytown YMCA to conduct an Aquatic program to achieve the mission of the association, and to develop member and participant potential. The Aquatic programs and facilities will be conducted in compliance with the YMCA of the USA's Pool Operator on Location and YMCA Aquatic Management guidelines. All programs will be conducted in accordance with Y-USA Skippers, Progressive Swimming, Life-guarding and Competitive Swimming and other specialized swim program guidelines, standards and certifications as established from time to time.

The Board of Directors has delegated responsibility for oversight of all Aquatic programs to the Property and Risk Management Committee, (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) to initiate and formulate a policy of safe practice and procedure for the guidance and protection of employees and participants in the Aquatic program.

It shall be the responsibility of the committee, in cooperation with management personnel and the Aquatic Directors to conduct and promote safe, competent instructional and recreational Aquatic activities.

It shall be the responsibility of the Aquatic Director to track and maintain verification of all orientations, trainings and drills. Verification must be kept in association personnel files.

It shall be the responsibility of the Facility Manager to maintain verification of all daily, weekly and monthly facility, equipment and safety check-lists. Verification must be maintained in permanent association records.

PHYSICAL SAFEGUARDS

1. All pool areas must have an audible emergency alarm system or bell which will summon competent aid from other parts of the facility and an emergency lighting system to ensure the safety of bathers during possible loss of electrical power. These systems shall be maintained in good working condition at all times and tested weekly with an appropriate log of tests maintained.
2. All pool areas shall have proper pool lighting, mechanical heat, and ventilating systems which shall be maintained in good working conditions at all times. Management personnel shall check these systems at least once monthly.
3. There must be suitable devices completely around the edge of the pool, such as a gutter or an expedient hand grab rail to permit firm grasping by occupants in the pool.
4. Buoy lines must be provided to mark off and segregate shallow sections of the pool for use by non-swimmers and non-swimmers must not go beyond its limits. Restriction of deck and pool may be advisable at the discretion of the instructor or lifeguard in charge.

5. Buoy lines shall be used to restrict swimmers from high risk areas such as the diving area and the slide entry area. A dedicated life guard should be assigned to manage and guard high risk areas at all times the diving boards or the slides are in use.
6. Entrances and exits to pool area shall be provided with positive locking devices to secure the area against unauthorized access.
7. All windows to the pool area must be secured against opening and entry from outside.
8. Zone Coverage: One lifeguard station must be located in relation to pool entrances so that no one can pass into the pool area without being observed by the lifeguard. All life guards must be positioned according to the zone coverage plan. The bottom and top of the entire assigned zone, 180 degrees, must be visible to the guard at all times.
9. Water in the pool shall be sufficiently clear to permit a black disk 6 inches in diameter on a white field, when placed on the bottom of the pool at the deepest point, to be clearly visible from the deck around the deep area of the pool. Such floating objects as kick-boards, rubber balls, etc. used in instructional or recreation period, are to be removed from the pool and pool area immediately after such periods end.
10. Water testing is to be done hourly by a non-guarding staff member.
11. The swimming pool structure will meet all Building and Sanitary Code requirements, and will be inspected every two years by a licensed engineer. A written report shall be obtained and kept on file.
12. The roof and suspended ceiling in the pool will be inspected quarterly by YMCA staff for structural safety and signs of corrosion and every other year by a qualified consultant.
13. Walking surfaces (i.e., decks, steps, ladders) will be constructed of, or treated to render them non-skid, and will be kept free of obstructions.
14. When the pool is drained for repair or cleaning, signs to that effect must be posted on the outside of all doors leading to the swimming pool, and all doors kept locked.
15. Exit signs shall be illuminated and visible from all areas of the pool.
16. Depth marker must be a minimum of four inches high, permanent. Contrasting depth markings should be located at both sides of the pool at the shallow end, slope break, deep point and deep end wall, and every 25 feet. Markers should be above the water line. The markers must be installed inside and outside the pool on the vertical and horizontal planes and have FT (feet) and IN (inches) spelled out.
17. The pool filters shall be routinely maintained and backwashed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
18. The inside of all pool filters shall be inspected every other year by a swimming pool service company or qualified staff. A written report shall be obtained and kept of file for three years.

19. Pool chemicals shall be stored in a safe, secure area and handled in accordance with the Y-USA POOL Operator on Location guidelines and manufacturer's instructions. OSHA "Material Safety Data Sheets" should be permanently mounted in the chemical storage area, the aquatics office and the front desk...
20. The following safety equipment shall be available and within ready access of the lifeguard stations at all times.
 - 20.a. A minimum of four reaching poles (minimum length 12 feet) shall be readily available. One pole should be at each lifeguard station with other poles spread evenly around the pool for use by "roving guards" or swim instructors.
 - 20.b. Shepherd's Crook, a pole of light metal approximately 15 feet long that has a blunt steel hook with at least 18 inches between the tip of the hook and the tip of the pole, should be fitted securely at one end.
 - 20.c. Soft ring buoys should be replaced with an 18 inch lifesaving ring with sufficient rope attached to reach all parts of the pool. The rope must be in good condition, free of frays. The ring must be fully accessible which means visible and not tied down or locked. Pools over 50 feet in length must have at least one ring along each of the longer sides of the pool.
 - 20.d. Rescue tubes and fanny packs holding a rescue mask and gloves shall be worn or carried by all guards on deck as is recommended by YMCA and the American Red Cross Lifeguarding certifications.
 - 20.e. First Aid Kit completely stocked to treat all pool emergencies.
 - 20.f. AED and Oxygen equipment will be provided and available at all pools during times of operation.
 - 20.g. Back Board with head restraints, three straps and Cervical Collars will be provided.
21. Shower rooms shall be provided with a plentiful supply of potable, heated water, adequately controlled with respect to temperature.
22. Lockers and toilets shall be provided and maintained in a manner to encourage neatness and cleanliness and to ensure high standards of sanitation.
23. Spectator areas, if any, shall be maintained in a neat and sanitary condition.
24. Rules, regulations, and procedures for the use of the swimming pool will be permanently mounted in the swimming pool area near each pool entrance. These should include but not be limited to:
 - 24.a. Pollution of Swimming Prohibited
 - 24.a.1.1. Urinating, defecating, spitting, or blowing the nose in the pool is prohibited.

- 24.b. Communicable Diseases - Persons having skin lesions, purulent sores, inflamed eyes or mouth, nose or ear discharge, or who are known to local health officer to be carrier of the micro-organisms of any communicable disease, shall not use the swimming pool.
 - 24.c. Compliance with Local Health Code requirements.
 - 24.d. Y-USA Pool Operator on Location and YMCA Aquatic Management guidelines.
25. Emergency procedures shall be posted and lifeguards trained to implement them.
26. Life guard stands will be provided for every 2000 SF of pool surface. Seat should be a minimum of five feet above the pool deck.
27. Anti-vortex drain covers and or active dual drains will be provided on all swimming and wading pools and Hot Tub drains. Compliance with the Graeme Baker Spa and Safety Act by December 19, 2008
28. All pools will be evacuated during thunder storms. Swimmers may return twenty minutes after the last clap of thunder was heard.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Branch Executive Director shall appoint a qualified Physical Education or Aquatic Director to administer and supervise aquatic programs.
Minimal credentials should include:
 - a. Two Years experience in an aquatic administration position.
 - b. Min. age 24 years.
 - c. YMCA and ARC Life Guard Instructor.
 - d. CPR for the Professional Rescuer Instructor (including AED and Oxygen administration)
 - e. Y-USA Pool Operator on Location (POOL)
 - f. Y-USA Aquatic Management (YAM).
2. Aquatic classes shall be taught by or under the supervision of a certified Instructor. Acceptable certifications include the YMCA instructor and/or the American Red Cross Water Safety Instructor certification.
3. Lifeguards (an employee holding a current American Red Cross or YMCA Lifeguarding, Professional Rescuer CPR with AED, Oxygen Administration certifications) shall be on duty at the pool deck whenever the pool is in use.
4. Minimum age for a life guard to guard alone is 18 years.
5. Lifeguards shall have clearly defined duties to include, but not limited to:
 - a. When a life guard is on duty their only duty is to life guard.

- b. Procedures on continuous scanning when swimmers are in the pool, as well as a complete tour and inspection of the pool and pool bottom during and immediately after groups have left the pool.
6. All life guards will participate in a New Guard Orientation to include a practical test on a full scenario emergency action plan. New guards can not guard alone until this requirement is met.
7. All life guards will participate in a minimum of one in-service training per month focusing on vigilance, scanning, emergency management and skill development.
8. Emergency Action Plan drills will be implemented quarterly including life guards and all other emergency response staff. Eg: MOD and Service Desk staff.
9. Scanning drills will be implemented weekly, unannounced while guards are on duty. Red Ball, Red Cap, Silhouette.
10. During periods of games (water polo, water basketball, races, etc.) only those actually participating in the activity may be permitted in the area where games are being played.
11. All access to pools shall be locked or otherwise effectively secured against unauthorized entry when the pool is not officially open.
12. The number of keys, for pool access locks, must be kept to a minimum and issued only to authorized maintenance and aquatic personnel. Keys, when not in use, must be kept in a secure place and not removed from the building.
13. Duties of the night watchman and /or night building supervisor must include checks to insure doors leading to the pool area are securely locked.
14. Lifeguards must not swim without another lifeguard on duty.
15. When maintenance personnel are working in the pool area, a lifeguard must be on duty in the facility or the maintenance person will have a life jacket made available to him/her.
(Remove)
16. A written contract must be obtained for the rental of YMCA aquatic facilities by Non-YMCA Groups and for YMCA use of Non-YMCA Owned Facilities. The contract shall include but not be limited to the following:
 - a. Responsibilities of Each Party
 - b. Supervision Requirements (Must always include YMCA guards)
 - c. "Hold Harmless" Naming YMCA as Additional Insurer Agreement
 - d. Certificate of Insurance
 - e. Safety Standards and Safety Equipment
 - f. Fees for Facility Use

PUBLIC HEALTH

1. Provisions shall be made to maintain all aquatic areas (pool, deck, locker rooms, showers, and spectator areas) in accordance with the sanitary standards as set forth in current city and state codes.
2. Pool lifeguards shall prohibit entrance into a pool of participants that evidence colds, dermatitis, sores, inflamed eyes, or have had diarrhea in the past two weeks.

SWIMMER SAFEGUARDS

1. It shall be the duty of the lifeguard in charge to determine the ability of those claiming to be a swimmer. Persons who are unable to swim one length of the pool and tread water for one minute shall be classified as a non-swimmer and assigned to non-swimming areas. Testing must not interfere with guarding responsibilities.
2. Non-swimmers shall be permitted to use only the shallow end of the pool during recreational swim.
 - a. The limit of the shallow area shall be designated by a buoy life line stretched across the pool at the 5ft or drop-off point.
 - b. Non-swimmers shall remain in shoulder depth water or shallower at all times.
 - c. Non-swimmers are not permitted use of the water slides.
 - d. Non-swimmers under the age of 18 who can not stand must have a parent or guardian in the water with them and with in arms reach at all times.
 - e. Children ages 18 and under able to pass the deep water test will be identified with a swim band. The band color will change from year to year and all children 18 and under will need to be retested on a yearly basis.
3. Parental supervision rules, minimum age to remain in the YMCA alone Eg. 12 years, must apply to the pool area as well. Lifeguards are lifeguards, not babysitters.
4. Hazardous or unseemly behavior is prohibited. In the interest of safety, indulgence in these practices will result in immediate dismissal from the pool area.
5. There shall be lifeguards assigned in adequate number based on the number of swimmers, pool size, and shape, and play structures. A minimum of one guard for every 25 swimmers in the pool.
6. The maximum number of bathers per pool as per Board of Health are as follows:

YMCA SWIMMING ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE THE UNIT FACILITY

1. Swimming will take place only in daylight or lighted facilities and when an approved YMCA lifeguard is in charge.
2. A person in charge of Water Safety, approved by the YMCA, shall have absolute authority whenever swimming or boating is being conducted.
3. For “small craft” (kayaking, rafting, row boating, power boating, sailing, canoeing) every person must wear a Coast Guard Approved Personal Flotation Device fitted to the individual and check by the staff.
4. When YMCA groups are engaged in competitive swimming meets and/or water carnivals outside the unit, the participants shall be guided by the rules and regulations covering facility, safety and behavior as outlined herein.
5. There shall be at least one Aquatic Training Event for all aquatic staff once per year conducted by qualified instructors.
6. Each aquatic staff member should have a review of the Aquatic Policy and training session with an Aquatic Director semi-annually. Such sessions shall include review of policy, rules, CPR, certifications and emergency procedures.

Adopted: _____YMCA Board of Directors

Date: _____