

Swim Testing Procedures for Youth

Swim Testing Policy Components:

1. Facility use age requirements
2. Testing procedure
3. Pool use restrictions
4. Swimmer identification
5. Pool safety arrangements
6. Lifeguard responsibility
7. Swimmer ability tracking

1. Facility use age requirements:

- Youth must be at least 12 years of age to access the facility without an adult
- Youth less than 12 years of age must have a responsible adult with them in the pool area at all times except during leader led programs.
- Youth non-swimmers as determined by the swim test, must have a responsible adult with them in the water (within arm's reach).
- Any child under seven years of age must have an adult (at least 18 years of age) accompany them in the water (within arm's reach).
- All youth guests must be accompanied by a member when accessing the facility and must follow the age/supervision requirements as listed above.

2. Swim testing procedure:

- Swim across the shallow end of pool. This will determine; "non-swimmer", "shallow water competency" and ability to continue to the deep water competency test.
- Deep Water Competency Test: Swim comfortably 25 yards from deep to shallow without touching the bottom or sides of the pool. Jump into water that is over the patron's head and return to the surface. Tread water for one minute; turn on their back, float briefly, exit water.

3. Pool use restrictions:

- Deep water competent swimmers may access all parts of the pool.
- Patrons who do not pass the swim test are considered non-swimmers.
- Patrons who decline to take the swim test are considered non-swimmers.
- Non-swimmers must stay in shallow water (armpit-depth or less) and require active adult supervision.
- Active adult supervision means an adult must be in the water within arm's reach at all times (1 adult per 2 children ratio).
- Non-swimmers who do not meet the "armpit-depth" guideline are required to wear a US Coast Guard approved Type II or III PFD and require active adult supervision.

4. Swimmer identification:

- All swimmers must be clearly identified as to their swimming ability.
- Swimmers are classified only as "swimmer" or "non-swimmer".
- Swimmer – green band
- Non-swimmer – no band

5. Pool safety arrangements:

- Pools zones should be organized for all swim times; including outside group use, birthday parties, recreation and family swims.
- Buoy-lines will be used to create deep-water and shallow-water zones.
- Diving and slide areas should be sectioned off with buoy lines in order to control access by only deep-water proficient swimmers; one at a time.

6. Lifeguard responsibilities:

- Swim testing should follow the POSTED schedule. Schedule should also be in the brochure
- Swim testing in addition to posted schedule may only be conducted when other swimmers are not in the pool or when additional Lifeguard supervision is present in sufficient ratio to allow for a Lifeguard to conduct testing.
- Lifeguards must ensure that all swimmers have been tested. Patrons who arrive and have not been tested are considered non-swimmers and must remain in arm-pit depth water until such time testing can be arranged.
- Lifeguards must ensure that adult supervision is provided as outlined in the procedures. Unsupervised non-swimmers will be removed from the water at the Lifeguard's discretion.

7. Swimmer ability tracking:

- A notebook will be maintained at the member service desk with swimmer's name, test date, Guard initials and ability level.
- Swimmers are given their GREEN band by the member service staff at check in.
- It is recommended that "deep water competency" be noted on a patron's access screen as they scan in and the green band be given at that time.
- Lifeguards will give patrons who have just successfully completed the "deep water competency test" their green band. They will get their GREEN band at check-in thereafter.

Additional recommendations:

- All swimmers will be given a colored identification band to wear in the pool. Non-swimmers and those not tested will have no band.
- Non-swimmers may not swim in the deep end of the pool unless during instruction.
- Swim lessons should be arranged (when possible) for swimmers that are not deep-water proficient.
- Posting swim test times helps in managing the safety swim test system and in educating parents about the safety swim test.
- Remember shallow water is in relationship to the swimmer; use a guideline of water that is armpit-depth or less. For small children, the shallow end of your pool still may be deep water to them. Water depth in shallow end varies.
- Depth is determined as the maximum depth in the zone. If the section of the pool (zone) has a depth from 3 – 5 feet, but there is not a line to restrict access to the 3 foot depth, then that zone is considered to be 5 feet deep and swimmers must meet the armpit-depth guideline.
- Final competency includes having the swimmer and parents read all pool rules
- Non-Swimmers who are not adequately supervised by a responsible adult will be immediately removed from the water at the Lifeguard's discretion for the safety of the non-swimmer.
- Instructional Flotation Devices (IFDs -such as noodles and bubbles) are for instructional use only and should not be used in lieu of a PFD.