



LIFESAVING SOCIETY® SOCIÉTÉ DE SAUVETAGE

The Lifeguarding Experts

Les experts en surveillance aquatique

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Information Bulletin COVID-19 Facility Operations Recommendations for living with and managing COVID-19 in Canada

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Background

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, the Lifesaving Society Canada has been carefully monitoring the progression of the virus both in Canada and around the world.

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) assessed COVID-19 as a pandemic. The [Public Health Agency of Canada](https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/public-health-agency-of-canada.html) (PHAC), provincial/territorial public health authorities and local public health units recommended targeted strategies to mitigate the community transmission of the virus. Through several waves of the pandemic, all levels of government implemented regulatory measures to protect the health and safety of the population and to maintain healthcare system capacity.

Lifesaving Society Canada has continued to monitor the pandemic closely, providing updates to operators as the situation has evolved. The Society approved extensions to vocational awards and provided guidance for operators to support their progressive reopening. The Society has also advocated for the physical and mental health benefits of aquatic recreational activities and the essential public service provided by aquatic operators who offer lifeguard supervised swimming locations and deliver basic instruction in swimming skills, lifesaving skills and CPR skills.

Implementation

Lifesaving Society Canada continues to advise owners, operators, lifeguards, aquatic instructors and coaches to monitor existing recommendations outlined by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), provincial and territorial public health authorities, and local & regional public health units. These resources continue to provide up to date information on protective measures against COVID-19.

At the current stage of the pandemic, the majority of government and public health implemented restrictions have been relaxed. The Society will no longer be updating the following Information Bulletins as found on the Lifesaving Society Canada website at <https://www.lifesaving.ca/covid-19.php> with the exception of the *COVID-19 Resuscitation & First Aid Recommendations*.

Owners and operators are asked to follow current local and regional public health guidance in relationship to COVID-19 and operators can support the efforts of public health authorities through the alignment of policies and procedures to support local recommendations. Operators should also review Lifesaving Society Canada's national standards providing additional operational details to assist swimming pool and waterfront operators.

The Lifesaving Society continues to reassess the public health risk based on the best available evidence as the COVID-19 situation evolves. Updates will be provided should additional information become available.

Definitions

- **Aquatic Facility:** Any swimming pool, wading pool, waterpark, waterfront or similar location used for aquatic activities such as swimming, wading, diving or aquatic sports.
- **Aquatic Instructor or Coach:** One who holds a current National Lifeguard certification together with a recognized aquatic instructor certification.
- **Assistant Lifeguard:** A person appointed by the owner or operator to assist a National Lifeguard in the supervision of bather safety at a swimming pool or waterfront.
- **Coronavirus:** Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.
- **COVID-19:** COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 was declared a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) in January 2020, and a pandemic in March 2020, affecting countries world-wide.
- **Current:** An award dated not more than two years from the date of certification. The exception being First Aid certifications which are 3 years from the date of certification
- **Operator:** the trained individual designated by the owner to be responsible for the day-to-day operation of an aquatic facility.
- **Owner:** the person or corporation who is the owner of an aquatic facility.
- **Swimming Pool:** An artificially constructed basin, whether indoor or outdoor, lined with concrete, fiberglass, vinyl, or similar material in which persons can swim, wade or dive.
- **Waterfront:** An outdoor, artificial or natural shoreline alongside a body of water that may include docks or piers and be used for aquatic activities such as swimming, wading, diving, or aquatic sports.

References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2022). *Healthy Swimming*. Retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/swimming/index.html>
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- Government of Canada (2022). *Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)*. Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>
- World Health Organization (2022). *Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic*. Retrieved from: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

Approval

- Approved by the Lifesaving Society Canada Board of Directors on January 30, 2023.

Disclaimer

Lifesaving Society Canada's National Safety Standards are developed using Coroners' recommendations, the latest evidence-based research, and reflect the aquatics industry's best practices at the time the publication was approved.

In the rapidly changing COVID-19 era, Lifesaving Society Canada will update the COVID-19 Information Bulletins as evidence-based research becomes available. The information contained within this document does not replace or supersede local, provincial/territorial or federal health authority guidelines.