



LIFESAVING SOCIETY  
The Lifeguarding Experts

# National Lifeguard Update

The Lifesaving Society has updated the National Lifeguard program following a review to ensure its curriculum and performance standards remain current, relevant and grounded in the competencies required by lifeguards.

The National Lifeguard program review took into account:

- Demonstrated need and research evidence
- Consistency with regulations across Canada
- Alignment with international standards and best practices where applicable
- Lifesaving Society values

The National Lifeguard program update also considered the 2020 revisions to the Society's Bronze medal awards. One of the main drivers of the Bronze revisions was to improve skill progressions and enhance the assistant lifeguard content in Bronze Cross – a National Lifeguard prerequisite. The updated National Lifeguard curriculum acknowledges and builds on those Bronze Cross competencies to provide a logical and smooth flow into National Lifeguard training.

## Key changes

The updated National Lifeguard program contains improvements to test item descriptions, purpose statements, Must Sees and notes. Some items have been replaced or combined, and a few have been added.

**Single-lifeguard and team situations:** In Pool and Waterfront options, instructors will find lifeguard situations presented separately to facilitate independent evaluation of the single-lifeguard response versus lifeguard team responses.

**New Rescue Aid Proficiency item:** designed to demonstrate candidates' mastery of this fundamental lifeguard competency, which is particularly important in single-lifeguard situations.

**Measurable physical standard items:** All physical standards now have measurable time, distance and weight requirements. Fitness items in which candidates carried a victim have been retired, repurposed or absorbed into other skill items. For example: the "spinal carry" (Waterpark) is retired and "rescue drill" is now a skill item with no time requirement. The physical components of the "approach and carry" (Pool and Waterpark) and "victim carry" (Waterfront and Surf) have been absorbed in the management of a distressed or drowning victim items.

**Victim management items:** Candidates may choose their own victims in the distressed or drowning, non-breathing and spinal-injured victim items. The distressed or drowning victim item is performed with *and* without an aid. Spinal-injured victim item now includes breathing and non-breathing victims.

### In addition:

- New items have been introduced: Endurance swim (Waterfront and Surf), Sprint challenge (Waterpark and Waterfront) and Object recovery and Management of an injured victim (Waterpark).
- Some items have not changed but their Must Sees have been updated or refined for accuracy, clarity and achievability.
- Knowledge of the benefits of bag-valve masks and suction is required in Lifeguarding theory and practice (Pool and Waterfront). Use of this equipment is not a requirement.
- The ability to identify appropriate lifeguard supervision zones is now a Must See requirement in positioning and rotation items.
- Appendix A first aid requirements feature some additions and minor updates to ensure continued consistency with Canadian standards and current ILCOR guidelines.



The Lifesaving Society acknowledges and thanks the many National Lifeguard Instructors and Examiners, and Affiliate Members across Canada who piloted the changes to the National Lifeguard program.

## No changes to prerequisites or programming hours

There are no changes to prerequisites: National Lifeguard candidates must hold Bronze Cross, Standard First Aid and be a minimum of 15 years of age as of the final day of the course.

There are no changes to the minimum time requirements. For example, National Lifeguard – Pool still requires a minimum of 40 hours. A Pool option recertification remains at a recommended 4 hours for 12 candidates.

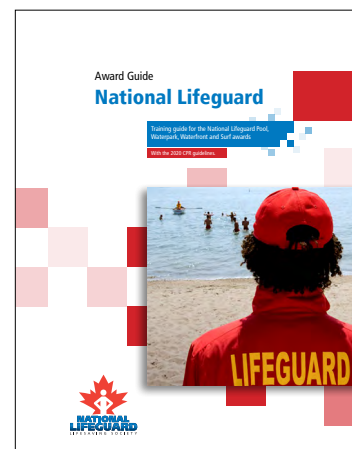
## New resources

All active National Lifeguard Instructors, Examiners and Trainers need the updated *National Lifeguard Award Guide* before teaching the revised National Lifeguard certifications.

National Lifeguard Instructor candidates receive the new award guide as part of their course materials.

## Original and Recertification test sheets

The revised National Lifeguard training program is supported by new (2022) National Lifeguard test sheets. New Recertification test sheets carry only the mandatory items that are evaluated on recerts. In the award guide, these items are marked with the (+) symbol.



NATIONAL LIFEGUARD LIFESAVING SOCIETY		Pool		Revised 2022	
This test sheet is for original exam candidates only.					
Side 1: Please record each candidate's name and contact information accurately.					
1 Last name	Gender	Date of birth	1 Lifeguarding theory & practice	2 Pool facility analysis	3 Rescue air proficiency
First name			4 Entries & removals	5 Rescue drill	6a Underwater swim
Address			6b	6c	6d
City	Prov.	Postal Code	Prerequisites	Bronze Cross	Date earned
E-mail				Standard 1st Aid	Date earned
Phone					

NATIONAL LIFEGUARD LIFESAVING SOCIETY		Pool		Recertification		Revised 2022	
This test sheet is for recertification exam candidates only.							
Side 1: Please record each candidate's name and contact information accurately.							
1 Last name	Gender	Date of birth	Prerequisites checked	6b	6c	6d	6e
First name			Object recovery				
Address			Sprint challenge				
City	Prov.	Postal Code					
E-mail			Prerequisites	National Lifeguard	Date earned		
Phone				Pool	Date earned		

## Updated award descriptions

**National Lifeguard – Pool** certification is designed to develop the fundamental values, judgment, knowledge, skills and fitness required by lifeguards. The National Lifeguard course emphasizes the lifeguarding skills, principles and practices, and the decision-making processes that will assist the lifeguard to provide effective safety supervision in swimming pool environments.

**National Lifeguard – Waterpark** certification is designed to develop the lifeguarding Skills, principles and practices, and the decision-making processes that will assist the lifeguard to provide effective safety supervision in waterpark environments. It builds on the fundamental values, judgment, knowledge, skills and fitness developed in the National Lifeguard Pool certification.

**National Lifeguard – Waterfront** certification is designed to develop the fundamental values, judgment, knowledge, skills and fitness required by waterfront lifeguards. The National Lifeguard Waterfront course emphasizes the lifeguarding skills, principles and practices, and the decision-making processes that will assist the lifeguard to provide effective safety supervision in waterfront environments.

**National Lifeguard – Surf** certification is designed to develop the lifeguarding skills, principles and practices, and the decision-making processes which will assist the lifeguard to provide effective safety supervision of surf beach environments. It builds on the fundamental values, judgment, knowledge, skills and fitness developed in the National Lifeguard Waterfront certification.



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## Updated National Lifeguard Exam Policy and Equipment List

The Society's updated November 1, 2022 [National Lifeguard Examination Policy](#) defines the minimum environmental requirements for hosting Pool, Waterpark, Waterfront and Surf courses. The policy also offers a more comprehensive description of the [mandatory and optional equipment](#) for each National Lifeguard option.

## New Brunswick transition to the updated National Lifeguard program

November 1, 2022 marks the official release of the updated National Lifeguard training program across New Brunswick. Affiliates are encouraged to transition to the updated program at their earliest convenience, but no later than December 31, 2023. Timing depends on the availability of updated National Instructors and Examiners and the availability of the mandatory equipment for the National Lifeguard option(s) being offered.

## Instructors, Examiners, Trainers: get updated

In New Brunswick, National Lifeguard Instructors must attend a National Lifeguard Update Clinic. The clinic is mandatory and is worth 3 credits towards your leadership recertification. Active National Lifeguard Instructors, Examiners and Trainers complete the following before teaching the updated curriculum:

- Contact the Lifesaving Society to register for a National Lifeguard Update Clinic.
- Purchase and carefully study the updated [National Lifeguard Award Guide](#). Start by reading the "Note to National Lifeguard Instructors."
- Examiners, consult the [National Lifeguard Recertification Notes for Examiners](#) posted on the website before conducting new recertification examinations.
- Everyone, consult the updated (effective November 1, 2022) [National Lifeguard Exam Policy](#) and [National Lifeguard Equipment List](#).
- Download the 2022 National Lifeguard original and recertification test sheets from [Find a Form](#) as needed. (The 2012 test sheets will be available only until December 31, 2023.)

## Contact Us

For more information regarding the transition to the updated National Lifeguard training program and support materials:

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