



Aquatics Program Safety and Procedure Manual

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Values Statement

The adaptive Aquatics Program provides Lakemary children and adults with positive recreational experiences in a safe water environment. The program utilizes individual assessments to address all present skill levels and educational planning. Comprehensive educational planning will incorporate goal-oriented situations whereby cognitive and physical attributes may be challenged. Performing of aquatics skills will facilitate a positive self-image and enhance other social skills generally associated with independent living.

Objectives

Provide a supervised environment whereby positive interaction with the water may be executed in the safest possible manner.

Increase range of motion through aquatic exercise, relaxation and stretching techniques.

Enhance positive social skills generally associated with independent living in the forms of peer-group interaction, acceptance, sharing, and the delaying of gratification.

Incorporate American Red Cross, Special Olympics Inc., and task specific adaptive Aquatics curriculum into a comprehensive developmental Aquatics Program.

Promote a positive self-image through development of swimming skills.

Orientation

Orientation is the foundation for a safe pool environment and when effectively implemented, will alleviate many behavioral incidents throughout the swimming season. Orientation provides an introduction of rules and concepts of the aquatics program.

Staff orientation will be completed during new hire training and in the Annual Risk Awareness training (ARA). The aquatics manager(s) and Lakemary lifeguards will assist staff in orientating children and adults for the first time at the McGrath Memorial Pool and mark orientation, swimming level and seizure status in the pool binder. Those attending off-campus outings will be orientated by staff and will go over pool rules and expectations on a per event basis.

Pool Rules

Please follow all posted pool rules and set expectations before entering the McGrath Memorial pool (Lakemary) or any other aquatic center.

McGrath Memorial Pool Rules

Prior to swim time:

- Each swimmer is required to have footwear on. Before entering the pool, they may take them off. When leaving the pool area, the swimmer is to put their footwear back on.
- Sunscreen is to be applied 30 min. prior to swim time and every 30 min. thereafter. Sunscreen is provided at the pool.

Entering the pool deck:

- If a life jacket is required, it is to be securely fastened by staff and checked by lifeguard before the gate is opened.
- Lifeguard will open pool gate

At the Pool:

- Enter the water by ramp, sitting on edge and scooting in, jumping feet first at the deep end. This is marked by the line on the pool floor.
- Walking at all times.
- No touching.
- No aggressive splashing.
- Put away toys when done.
- Listening to lifeguards and staff is the best and all questions are welcome.

Life jackets:

- All children must wear a life jacket unless they pass the swim test.
- Lifejackets can be taken off when they are outside the pool gate.

Swim Test: Test will be given by the Lifeguards

1. Enter the water by using the ramp or sliding in (shallow end).
 2. Swim from shallow wall to deep end wall.
 3. Exit from the water by using the ladder or the side.
- All students must be out of the water while swimmers take the swim test unless there are two lifeguards.
 - An individual only needs to pass the swim test once. The swim test will count towards all environments. The lifeguard will initial and place the date by the individual's name in the pool binder. Individuals in question (fail test) can retake the test one week thereafter either in school or residential.

Outside of the pool:

- Each swimmer can use a pool towel when they are done swimming; they will place the towel in the designated area after exiting the pool area.

Staff Roles

Pool support staff will have the primary responsibility for supervising participants at the pool. Pool support staff can include Behavior Health Technicians, campus coaches, Direct Support Professionals, Education Paraprofessionals, teachers or any other LMC staff person who provides supervision for pool participants. Procedures and guidelines for the work of pool support staff can be found in the following sections. The participation of other Children and Adult Services staff is also important for the success of the Aquatics Program.

Nursing Staff

Nursing staff will identify participants who have medical needs which may need to be monitored in the pool environment. This includes seizures, particular concerns related to medication side effects such as photosensitivity and other medical concerns. At the start of each swimming season, nursing staff will provide a list of precautions for each Aquatics Program participant. Precautions will also be provided for any person admitted during the Pool season if that individual will be participating in the program. The list of all special precautions will be maintained by the aquatics manager (s).

Service Teams

Adult and Children's Service Teams provide a great deal of information regarding behavior management which may be relevant to the pool environment. Lifeguards will be provided with an update on all individual behavior management plans relevant to the pool environment at the start of each swimming season. Lifeguards are also encouraged to communicate directly with the service team should they have a need for development of a particular strategy for support of an individual in the Pool environment.

Lifeguard Responsibilities

Assessing Pool Environment

Lifeguards will assess the pool environment daily prior to opening the pool for participants. The pool assessment consists of the opening duties. These duties include the following tasks:

- Chemical Levels are in acceptable range:
- Chlorine = range of 1-5; not lower than 1 pH = 7.2 – 7.8)
- Deck area is free of hazards
- Maintenance equipment properly stored (hoses, tubes, skimmer covers in place)
- Changing area is free of hazards
- Personal flotation devices are stored properly in the pool house.
- Recreation/education equipment is stored properly in the pool house or pool deck.

- Safety equipment is placed in their designated areas at the pool. Rescue tubes are placed at lifeguard chairs. One for each lifeguard/
- Lifeguards will report any potential hazard to the Aquatics Manager(s) prior to any decision to close the pool for programming.

Lifeguards will assess all safety, educational and maintenance equipment to determine whether it is functioning properly and in good working order.

Assessing Weather Condition

Weather conditions continually change throughout the programming day. Lifeguards will close the pool for programming during the following conditions:

- Active state or local weather alert warnings in the region
- Heavy rains which obstruct visibility into the pool
- Sound of thunder or sight of lightning (Within 7 Mile Radius)

In the case of pool closure, the respective campus coaches or adult staff will be contacted. The phone numbers are in the pool binder.

Monitoring Participants

The lifeguard is responsible for monitoring and responding to all situations by participants and pool support staff which occur at the pool. Lifeguards will position themselves in a place which provides the best monitoring capabilities.

The lifeguard will continually scan/monitor and verbally respond to behaviors during the swim time which are associated with the pool rules. Lifeguards will also encourage pool support staff to respond consistently.

Lifeguards may only get in the water to be proactive regarding safety concerns if two lifeguards are on duty, otherwise proactive measures need to be conducted by staff.

Lifeguard ratio is 1 lifeguard to 12 participants.

Pool Support Staff

Communication

While at the pool, all pool support staff will be under the direct supervision of the lifeguard on duty. Pool support staff are expected to follow instructions provided to them by the lifeguard.

Pool support staff will assist in enforcement of pool rules. They will also assist in providing information about proper pool procedures to participants. Pool support staff

will be able to utilize the best mode of communication appropriate for the individual participant.

Pool support staff will provide ongoing feedback and modeling of correct pool procedures for participants. It is expected and required that there be ongoing interaction between participants and pool support staff throughout the period of swim time. It is not mandatory for pool support staff to enter the water but highly encouraged. It is suggested that if most of the participants are in the water, the pool support staff get in the water. This provides an opportunity to enhance interaction and support for participants. The pool support staff should be prepared to get in at any time for behavior and emergencies that may arise.

Provide Supervision & Support for Swimmers

Pool support staff will be responsible for setting limits and providing redirection as needed to maintain a safe pool environment. It will be up to the pool support staff to handle participants needing to sit out. Pool support staff will sit with and/or monitor the participants during time out of the water. If a behavior incident needs to be recorded, the pool support staff will be responsible for inputting that into Myevolv. The lifeguard may help with the times and details.

Ensuring Clothing & Shoes are Stored Properly

Pool support staff will assist participants in proper storage of their clothing, shoes and other personal items at the pool.

Applying Sunscreen to Swimmers

Pool support staff will be responsible for ensuring sunscreen is thoroughly applied on each participant when needed, which is: 30 min prior to each pool session, at the start of your pool time, and every 30 min. of pool time. Sunscreen will be available at the pool deck for further use.

Swimming & Eating

Pool support staff will ensure participants are safe with food. Edible rewards are allowed on the pool deck. Participants are only allowed to consume food if they are out of the water and on the pool deck. If participants bring snacks to the pool due to not finishing them or continuing to eat them from another environment such as the dorms, it can be consumed outside the pool gate, before they enter the pool area.

Tanning Oils

Tanning oils and products which increase the power of the sun are not permitted to be utilized in the aquatic environment.

Other Water Environments

There **must** be a Lifeguard on duty at the water environment. If there is no lifeguard on duty at the water environment, then individuals supported may not enter the water.

Seizures

Communication

The aquatics manager(s) and lifeguards will maintain a list of children participants who have a history of seizures. This will be in the pool binder at the pool house. Adult staff are responsible for knowing their people's seizure history.

Life Jackets

Adult participant with a seizure precaution should wear a life jacket while in the pool. If a participant with a seizure precaution refuses to wear a life jacket, they must have 1-on-1 staff with continuous eye contact and within an arms distance of the 1-on-1 staff. The support staff person who provides this 1-on-1 support must be physically able to manage the participant in the event of a seizure or emergency.

Children participants with a seizure precaution must have a life jacket on while in the pool or they aren't allowed in the pool area. If a children participant has had a seizure within 6 months, they aren't allowed in the pool area.

If an individual supported has a seizure while in the water (even if they have a seizure plan), **911 must be called.**

Behavioral Incidents

Behavioral Crisis

Should a behavioral crisis occur while participants are in the water, the lifeguard will announce "exit the pool" to let the participants know they need to exit the pool. The pool support staff will assist with the behavior crisis in the water. The lifeguard or additional pool support staff will escort cooperative participants out of the pool environment. The lifeguard will enter the water when deemed necessary as outlined in their certified lifeguard training.

The lifeguard will re-open the pool environment to participants when safe to do so.

If the behavioral crisis occurs out of the water, pool support staff will take over the situation and the lifeguard will continue to watch the water, the surrounding pool deck and call for assistance. If there is more than one lifeguard on duty, one can do the duties of lifeguard, and the other lifeguard may assist in the behavior crisis if they are trained in Safety Crisis Management.

The pool environment can stay open in this situation. This will be up to the lifeguard and the pool support staff.

Some behaviors must be reported on an Incident Report.

These include:

- Physical aggression
- Verbal or gestural threat of aggression
- Dunking another swimmer or participant (even in play)
- Sexual approach/behavior
- Hanging on or touching other swimmers or participants
- Pushing and shoving

The pool support staff will be the ones expected to write the incident report and input that into Myevol. The lifeguard can supply the pool support staff with details or times that were missed. The lifeguard will keep general information regarding the behavior: name of person, staff, zone or class and short description of behavior, but it is up to the staff to write the incident report.

The Lifeguard will communicate all relevant information to appropriate support services in written and verbal correspondence (i.e., Nursing, Education, Behavioral Management Teams, Service Teams, etc.).

Correcting Behavior

Having the participant perform the desired behavior reinforces the likelihood of it being performed more regularly and without prompt.

It is particularly important to provide praise whenever a participant subsequently performs the desired behavior correctly.

Support

Behavioral incidents will occur at the pool. All behavior incidents at the pool should be considered serious.

Participants from time to time may be asked to exit the pool and sit out due to an inability to follow rules. Sitting out 2-5 minutes will generally be effective. Prior to reentering the pool, an attempt to have the participant describe the desired behavior to the lifeguard and/or staff is important.

Staff should be in the water assisting with safety and participating. If a person gets out of the water, it is still the staffs' responsibility to monitor and encourage them to re-enter the pool.

Stay positive, stay healthy and never give pool safety a day off.

Emergency Action Plan

Step I

In the event of an emergency, the Lifeguard will take control of the situation immediately and ensure necessary First Aid or CPR is provided.

If there is only one lifeguard at the pool, the other employee(s) on duty will assist the remaining swimming individuals served out of the pool and wait further instructions from the lifeguard.

Step II

Upon determining that additional medical assistance is needed, the lifeguard will instruct the other employee(s) on duty to call EMS (911) by telephone.

Step III

The lifeguard will assist the injured party and send an individual to the front of the administrative building to direct the Emergency Medical Technician/Paramedic to the injured party.

Step IV

The Lifeguard will delegate an individual to contact appropriate Lakemary personnel. (See On-call/Emergency Phone Numbers list posted on the back of the Pool House door).

Step V

Lifeguard will stay with the individual until higher trained medical personnel arrives to take over.

The Lifeguard will complete an incident report and personally give the completed form to the aquatics manager(s) who will give to their supervisor.

Step VI

If the press should arrive at the pool, only the President or designee should speak about the emergency. A statement will be released with the help of Lakemary staff. Do not release any names until you are authorized to do so.

ON-CALL/EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBER LIST (posted in the pool house)

* Do not hang up on emergency telephone system until told to do so by the operator taking the phone call.

