
LIFEGUARDING FACT SHEET

Purpose

The purpose of the American Red Cross Lifeguarding course is to provide entry-level lifeguard participants with the knowledge and skills to prevent, recognize and respond to aquatic emergencies and to provide care for breathing and cardiac emergencies, injuries and sudden illnesses until emergency medical services (EMS) personnel take over.

Prerequisites

1. Must be 15 years old on or before the final scheduled session of this course.
2. Swim 300 yards continuously demonstrating breath control and rhythmic breathing. Candidates may swim using the front crawl, breaststroke or a combination of both but swimming on the back or side is not allowed. Swim goggles may be used.
3. Tread water for 2 minutes using only the legs. Candidates should place their hands under the armpits.
4. Complete a timed event within 1 minute, 40 seconds.
 - o Starting in the water, swim 20 yards. The face may be in or out of the water. Swim goggles are not allowed.
 - o Surface dive, feet-first or head-first, to a depth of 7 to 10 feet to retrieve a 10-pound object.
 - o Return to the surface and swim 20 yards on the back to return to the starting point with both hands holding the object and keeping the face at or near the surface so they are able to get a breath. Candidates should not swim the distance under water. Exit the water without using a ladder or steps.

Learning Objectives

- Describe the characteristics and responsibilities of a professional lifeguard.
- Define certain legal considerations and apply them to situations that might be encountered in lifeguarding.
- Describe ongoing training for lifeguards.
- Describe what it means to work as part of a lifeguard and safety team.
- Describe the role lifeguards play in ensuring facility safety.
- Identify how to ensure the safety of patrons when weather conditions create safety concerns.
- Explain the reasons for common rules and regulations at aquatic facilities.
- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively enter the water and approach a victim.
- Describe the role that facility management plays in facility safety.
- Describe the drowning process.
- Identify the behaviors of a swimmer, distressed swimmer, and an active and a passive victim.
- Identify and define elements of effective surveillance.
- Explain proper scanning techniques and identify tactics to overcome scanning challenges.
- Identify various types of zones of surveillance.
- Explain how communication with patrons plays a role in preventing injuries.
- Explain patron surveillance techniques for various activities.
- Explain patron surveillance techniques for facilities with special attractions.
- Explain and demonstrate lifeguard rotations.
- Demonstrate how to perform effective surveillance including scanning, victim recognition and lifeguard rotations.
- Explain patron surveillance techniques for organized groups.
- Explain the purpose and general procedures of an emergency action plan (EAP).
- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively assist a distressed swimmer, rescue an active and passive victim and rescue multiple victims.
- Demonstrate the ability to implement an EAP and perform a rescue.
- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively rescue a submerged victim in shallow or deep water.
- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively perform feet-first and head-first surface dives.
- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively perform a two-person removal of a victim from the water using a backboard.
- Describe what standard precautions to take to prevent disease transmission when providing care.
- Demonstrate proper removal of disposable gloves.
- Describe the general procedures for injury or sudden illness on land.
- Identify items of concern when conducting a scene size-up.
- Demonstrate how to perform a primary assessment and place a victim in the H.A.IN.E.S. recovery position.
- Identify victim conditions that indicate the need to summon emergency medical services (EMS) personnel.
- Understand how to safely and effectively move a victim on land.
- Demonstrate how to use a resuscitation mask.
- Recognize and care for a breathing emergency.

- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively give ventilations.
- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively use a bag-valve-mask (BVM) resuscitator with two rescuers.
- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively care for an obstructed airway for a conscious and an unconscious victim.
- Demonstrate the ability to work as a team to implement an EAP, perform a rescue and perform emergency care.
- Identify the four links in the Cardiac Chain of Survival and identify the importance of each.
- Recognize the signs of a heart attack.
- Identify the steps for caring for a victim of a heart attack.
- Identify signs and symptoms of cardiac arrest.
- Demonstrate how to safely and effectively perform one-rescuer CPR and two-rescuer CPR.
- Demonstrate how to use an automated external defibrillator (AED).
- Identify precautions for using an AED.
- Demonstrate how to perform a secondary assessment.
- Identify how to recognize and care for a victim of sudden illness, injuries and shock.
- Demonstrate how to control external bleeding.
- Identify how to recognize and care for a victim of poisoning, heat-related illnesses and cold-related emergencies.
- Demonstrate how to immobilize muscle, bone and joint injuries.
- Demonstrate the ability to work as a team to implement an EAP, perform a secondary assessment and provide first aid care.
- Identify possible causes of head, neck or spinal injuries on land.
- Identify signs and symptoms of head, neck or spinal injuries.
- Demonstrate how to care for victims with head, neck or spinal injuries on land.

- Demonstrate how to perform front and rear head-hold escapes.
- Demonstrate how to give in-water ventilations.
- Demonstrate how to perform a quick removal of a victim from the water.
- Demonstrate how to care for victims with head, neck and spinal injuries in shallow and deep water.
- Demonstrate how to rescue an active victim in deep water.
- Demonstrate how to rescue a submerged passive victim in deep water and provide care.

Length

Approximately 25 hours, 20 minutes

Instructor

Currently certified Lifeguarding instructors or instructor trainers

Certification Requirements

- Attend and participate in all class sessions.
- Demonstrate competency in all required skills and activities.
- Demonstrate competency in all required final rescue skill scenarios.
- Pass both the Section 1—CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer and First Aid and Section 2—Lifeguarding Skills final written exams with minimum grades of 80 percent.

Certificate Issued and Validity Period

American Red Cross certificate for Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED: 2 years

Participant Products/Materials (available in e-book and print formats)

American Red Cross Lifeguarding Manual