



Lifesaving Society Update

December 4, 2020

As the Lifesaving Society looks to provide support to pool operators in BC and Yukon, following are some guidelines for your consideration:

1. **Latest PHO Order:** On December 2, the Provincial Health Officer released an updated order on [Gatherings and Events](#). Excerpts relevant to aquatic facilities and programs include:

- a. **Lifesaving Society Courses and Recertifications:**

“For certainty, this Order does not apply to . . . students and instructors when engaged in occupational training activities which cannot be provided virtually by their nature; individuals attending regularly scheduled classes or practices in a recreation centre other than indoor group high intensity fitness activities, indoor group low intensity fitness activity or adult team sport.”

As mentioned in our [November 20 Update](#) just a reminder that Society programs can continue as long as:

- a. All candidates reside in the same health region and are not travelling from one health region to another to attend the course/recertification. In regard to instructor and trainer leadership, communication with the host Affiliate will be important to determine if the course/recertification is deemed ‘essential’.
- b. The skills adaptations for all Lifesaving Society courses are maintained as outlined in the Skills Adaptation Evaluation Chart During COVID-19.
 - i. The bubble buddy system and social circles (excluding household members) are no longer permitted while the current order is in effect.
 - ii. Note regarding ‘Contact Level’ --- a training or lifesaving sport rescue manikin cannot be used as a substitute for a full-body manikin or a household member.
 - iii. For skill adaptations listing bubble buddies as the only permissible contact level (i.e. Team Approach and BVM), a household member may be used while the order is in effect. An exception to this can be made if all candidates in the course are already in a work cohort, referring to a group of fellow workers who work exclusively together on a regular basis.
- c. All other COVID-19 protocols are followed as outlined in the Guidelines for Delivering Training During COVID-19.

For Affiliates, both the Skills Adaptation Evaluation Chart During COVID-19 and the Guidelines for Delivering Training During COVID-19 can be accessed when you login to Affiliate Resources. For Instructors/Trainers, they are accessed through the Mandatory COVID-19 Instructor Update.

- b. **First Aid Courses:** Similar to a. above, first aid courses being run as *“occupational training events which cannot be provided virtually by their nature”* are allowed when all COVID-19 precautions are enforced.

c. Junior Lifeguard Clubs: Under Section B. Permitted Events:

“A person may permit a place, other than a private residence or vacation accommodation, to be used for, or may organize or host, a support group meeting, a meal provided without charge to people in need, a wedding, baptism or funeral, a program for children or youth or sport for children or youth subject to the provisions of this Part.” The provisions are outlined on pg. 6-9 of [the Order](#).

d. Masters Swimming: Many of you are questioning whether you should be continuing to support Masters swimming sessions. We would suggest it falls under Section A. Events which states, *“For certainty, this Part applies to and prohibits indoor group high intensity fitness activity, and adult team sport in any place.”*

As per the [Swim BC Membership Bulletin](#) released December 3, *“The intent of the order is to stop all adult sport activity where participants come together to pursue that activity. Adult sport is defined as all activities for 19 years and older and includes individuals under 19 that participate with that cohort. For clarity, **all masters swimming club activity and all varsity swimming activity is suspended.**”*

Of course, this does not prevent masters swimmer(s) from booking a length swim time for themselves as other members of the public can. Facilities should not however, be hosting or sanctioning a masters club swim due to the PHO perception that this leads to socialization contributing to the spread of the virus.

2. No Further Extension of Lifesaving Society Certifications: As stated in our [October 5 Update](#), *“Unless a dramatic increase in COVID-19 cases causes pools to again shut down, this will be the final extension. It will be incumbent upon members to ensure they prepare themselves for, and actively pursue, recertification prior to December 31, 2020.”*

Although there has been an increase in cases since then, pools have not shut down and opportunities for recertification are available. We have reached out to several Affiliates to ensure they have been able to recertify their lifeguards in order to staff their pools adequately and have received a thumbs up in response. Most NL recertifications are taking place in-house for staff cohorts and are being conducted in view of the best COVID-19 practices and protocols.

3. Test Sheet Submission: Some Affiliates have expressed challenges in uploading test sheets on the website. For detailed guidance, please go to the Database User Guides in Affiliate Resources. If you need further information, email Member Services at awards@lifesaving.bc.ca or call 604-299-5450.

The Lifesaving Society’s purpose in interpreting the PHO orders as stated here is to help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 and keep us all safe. We will be pursuing further interpretations of the new orders with the Provincial Health Officer and provide you with any updates as we receive them.

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