



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®  
SOCIÉTÉ DE SAUVETAGE

*The Lifeguarding Experts*

*Les experts en surveillance aquatique*

Lifesaving Society Canada  
Suite 001 – 1145 Hunt Club Road, Ottawa, Ontario K1V 0Y3  
Telephone: 613-746-5694  
E-mail: [experts@lifesaving.ca](mailto:experts@lifesaving.ca) Web: [www.lifesaving.ca](http://www.lifesaving.ca)

## Safety Standards for Canadian Swimming Pools and Waterfronts Aquatic Facility Standard

### Lifeguard Age Standard

#### Standard

The minimum age for a lifeguard is 16 years of age.

#### Definitions

**Lifeguard:** a person with a current National Lifeguard certification appointed by the owner or operator to maintain surveillance over bathers while they are on the deck or in the pool and to supervise bather safety.

**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.

#### Rationale

- Sixteen years is a reasonable minimum age of maturity for the assumption of lifeguard responsibilities and the performance of lifeguard duties.
- Sixteen years is consistent with the minimum age for lifeguards recommended by the International Life Saving Federation.

#### Implementation

Employers should require candidates to be a minimum of 16 years of age when establishing lifeguard job descriptions.

#### References

- International Labour Organization. (1973). Minimum Age Convention, Convention concerning minimum age for admission to employment. Geneva.
- International Life Saving Federation. (2009). Minimum Age for Training as a Lifeguard. Leuven, Belgium.

- International Life Saving Federation. (2007). ILS Age Survey Recommended Minimum Age for ILS International Life Saving and Lifeguarding Certificates. Leuven, Belgium.
- United States Lifeguard Association. (2007). Proposed rules for child labour – Lifeguard Age, correspondence to officer of enforcement policy. United States Department of Labour.
- United States Lifeguard Association. (1980). Guidelines for establishing open water recreational beach standards.
- World Health Organization. (2003). Guidelines for safe recreational water environments Volume 1. World Health Organization. Geneva.

### Approval

- Approved by the Lifesaving Society Canada Board of Directors on 10 April 2012.
- Revised and approved by the Lifesaving Society Canada Board of Directors on 30 September 2019.

### 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.

The purpose of these standards is to encourage swimming pool, waterpark and waterfront owners, managers, operators and regulators to adopt these standards, in order to prevent drownings in aquatic environments.

Lifesaving Society Canada's National Safety Standards do not replace or supersede local, provincial/territorial or federal legislation or regulations, but they are considered the standard to which aquatic facility operators should work towards, in order to enhance safety within their operations and to prevent drowning.