



National Lifeguard Re-Exam Pilot Project

Notes for Examiners

Valid Only Until 31 December 2023



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

The Lifeguarding Experts

NATIONAL LIFEGUARD RE-EXAM PILOT PROJECT NOTES FOR EXAMINERS

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The Lifesaving Society is Canada's lifeguarding expert. The Society works to prevent drowning and water-related injury through its training programs, Water Smart® public education initiatives, water-incident research, aquatic safety management services, and lifesaving sport.

Annually, over 1.2 Canadians participate in the Society's swimming, lifesaving, lifeguard and leadership training programs. The Society sets the standard for aquatic safety in Canada and certifies Canada's National Lifeguards – the professional standard for lifeguards in Canada.

The Society is an independent, charitable organization educating Canadian lifesavers since the first Lifesaving Society Bronze Medallion Award was earned in 1896.

The Society represents Canada internationally as an active member of the Commonwealth Royal Life Saving Society and the International Life Saving Federation. The Society is the Canadian governing body for lifesaving sport – a sport recognized by the International Olympic Committee and the Commonwealth Games Federation.

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Ces Notes sont disponibles en français.

NOTE TO EXAMINERS

The purpose of the National Lifeguard (NL) Re-Exam Pilot project is to address the ongoing lifeguard shortage, reduce barriers to certification and support candidates that only require some additional practice while maintaining Lifesaving Society program standards and integrity.

Understanding that candidates taking National Lifeguard have already achieved the standards in Bronze Medallion and Bronze Cross, as well as Standard First Aid first as per jurisdictional requirements.

In order to ensure that lifeguards can perform at the National Lifeguard standard; candidates are expected to actively participate in 100% of the original National Lifeguard course. If unsuccessful (participated in 100% of the course but failed one or more items), the candidate is eligible to participate in an NL Re-Exam where all items are evaluated.

These Notes will guide your National Lifeguard Re-Exam planning.

NL RE-EXAM PROGRAM POLICIES

- ❑ The following National program policies shall apply:
 - Certifications will not be issued to candidates who do not have the required National prerequisites.
 - Prerequisite awards must be earned prior to the start of the course to which they apply. Prerequisite awards need not be current.
 - Minimum age requirements must be attained by the day of certification. There are no exceptions.
 - When two or more awards are offered together, the Society deems the prerequisite award to have been earned in the correct order. Candidates for an award must complete all items required for that award.
 - Reference the National Lifeguard Award Guide for minimum participants required if only one candidate is being evaluated.

NL RE-EXAM PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- ❑ The NL Re-Exam must include the following components:
 - Welcome and opening remarks on behalf of the Society.
 - Examination to include all test items for the applicable award(s).
 - Closing remarks including results for each candidate.
 - Send the completed NL Re-Exam Pilot Feedback Form and applicable test sheets to the Branch office within two weeks of the exam.

SUGGESTED TIME GUIDELINES

- ❑ Although a minimum of 4 hours is suggested for the re-exam, enough time must be scheduled to ensure that candidates are evaluated on all items. The actual time needed will vary depending on:
 - Number of candidates and examiners
 - Candidate skill level
 - Exam format
 - Number and type of evaluation activities selected
 - Open water conditions (waterfront)

SUGGESTED DELIVERY OPTIONS

- ❑ Gathering information during the pilot phase regarding how the re-exam was delivered is important to analyze what worked, what didn't and why.
- ❑ The actual delivery format may depend on:
 - Number of candidates and examiners
 - Candidate skill level
 - Facility availability
- ❑ Delivery suggestions include:
 - Co-delivering the NL Re-Exam with an NL Recert. Candidates taking the Re-Exam must be evaluated on all NL Items in addition to the mandatory recertification items.
 - Delivering a stand-alone NL Re-Exam, additional time can be allocated to training prior to the examination.
 - Co-delivering the NL Re-Exam during the final portion of an on-going National Lifeguard original course.

EXAMINER PREREQUISITES

- ❑ A current National Lifeguard Examiner evaluates National Lifeguard Pool and/or Waterfront candidates as per Branch policy.
- ❑ In some Branches, National Lifeguard Instructors are recognized as Examiners and can therefore evaluate and certify the candidates.

CANDIDATE PREREQUISITES

- ❑ To obtain National Lifeguard through a re-exam, a candidate must:
 - Meet the National Lifeguard prerequisites : minimum 15 years of age, Bronze Cross certification (not current), and Standard First Aid (as defined by the Branch). Prerequisite awards must be shown at the time of the exam.
 - Have completed a full National Lifeguard original course and failed one or more items (versus an incomplete due to lack of attendance).
 - Successfully complete a National Lifeguard Re-Exam, by being evaluated in all items for the Pool or Waterfront options respectively.

ENVIRONMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

- ❑ The environment necessary to adequately prepare candidates for supervision and rescue response in each of the two National Lifeguard options are outlined below:

Option	Environmental Requirement
Pool	A body of water that is a minimum of 12.5 m in length (25 m preferred) and a minimum of 1.5 m in depth (3 m preferred) at the deepest end.
Waterfront	An open water environment with beach access.

EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS

- ❑ The following chart identifies the equipment required in the updated National Lifeguard programs.

	X = Mandatory O = Optional	
Equipment	NL Pool	NL Waterfront
Resuscitation manikin with lungs	X	X
AED trainer	O	O
Barrier devices (pocket mask with a one-way mechanical valve and hypoallergenic medical examination gloves)	X	X
Bag-Valve-Mask	O	O
First aid kit (practice); contents include band aids, gauze, dressings and triangular bandages, blankets, towels, medication placebos, and auto-injector trainers for in-class use	X	X
Submersible manikin	O	O
Buoyant rescue aid (minimum 50 newtons of buoyancy) such as a rescue tube, rescue can, ring buoy, or an adult lifejacket or PFD	X	X
Non-buoyant rescue aids, such as a throw line, throw bag, and reaching pole	X	X
Spineboard or other appropriate device	X	X
4.5 kg (10 lb.) weight	N/A	N/A
9 kg (20 lb.) weight	X	X
Whistles	X	X
Timing device	X	X
Distance measuring device (100-200 m)	N/A	X
Masks, fins, and snorkels	N/A	X
Paddleboard or rescue craft	N/A	X

NL RE-EXAMINATION

- ❑ To earn the National Lifeguard Pool or National Lifeguard Waterfront certification, candidates must perform all test items to standard. If a candidate is not successful in any of the National Lifeguard items during the NL Re-Exam, they will receive a fail and must re-attend another NL Re-Exam. If a candidate has failed several re-examination attempts (if known), it is recommended that they take the full NL course again.
- ❑ The updated (March 2023) *National Lifeguard Award Guide* details item descriptions, purpose statements, learning outcomes, evaluation criteria (Must Sees) and notes for National Lifeguard Examiners.
- ❑ Review the test items and plan the exam to achieve all of the evaluation criteria. Candidate knowledge, competency and skills should be evident in their performance in lifeguard situations.
- ❑ Examiners must complete the original NL Pool and NL Waterfront test sheets as applicable. All test sheets are available as fillable PDFs.
- ❑ Similar items can be combined to make the best use of time while maintaining program standards and integrity. See chart below.

National Lifeguard Pool	
Item	Notes
1: Lifeguarding theory and practice	Test knowledge through practical application.
2: Pool facility analysis	Test knowledge through practical application.
3: Rescue aid proficiency	Evaluated in Items 11a-d and 12a-b
4: Entries and removals	Evaluated in Items 11a-d and 12a-b
5: Pool skills: rescue drill	Evaluate as stand-alone item
6a: Physical standard: underwater swim	Evaluate as stand-alone item
6b: Physical standard: object recovery	Evaluate as stand-alone item
6c: Physical standard: sprint challenge	Evaluate as stand-alone item
6d: Physical standard: endurance challenge	Evaluate as stand-alone item
7: Lifeguard communication	Integrated into Item 12a and 12b
8a: Pool supervision: positioning and rotation	Integrated into Item 12a and 12b
8b: Pool supervision: scanning and observation	Integrated into Item 12a and 12b
8c: Pool supervision: prevention and intervention	Integrated into Item 12a or 12b
9: Pool emergencies: specialized techniques	Integrated into Item 12b
10: Facility search: missing person	Integrated into Item 12b
11a: Management of distressed or drowning victim	May evaluate as stand-alone or integrated into Item 12a or 12b
11b: Management of submerged, non-breathing victim	May evaluate as stand-alone or integrated into Item 12a or 12b
11c: Management of spinal-injured victims	May evaluate as stand-alone or integrated into Item 12a or 12b
11d: Management of an injured victim	May evaluate as stand-alone or integrated into Item 12a or 12b
12a: Lifeguard situation: single guard	See designing situations below
12b: Lifeguard situations: team	See designing situations below

National Lifeguard Waterfront	
Item	Notes
1: Lifeguarding theory and practice	Test knowledge through practical application.
2: Waterfront facility analysis	Test knowledge through practical application.
3: Rescue aid proficiency	Evaluated in Items 12a-d and 13a-b
4: Entries and removals	Evaluated in Items 12a-d and 13a-b
5: Skin diving skills	Evaluate as stand-alone item
6: Rescue drill	Evaluate as stand-alone item
7: Use of rescue craft	Evaluate as stand-alone item
8a: Physical standard: sprint challenge	Evaluate as stand-alone item
8b: Physical standard: endurance challenge	Evaluate as stand-alone item
9: Lifeguard communication	Integrated into Item 13a and 13b
10a: Positioning and rotation	Integrated into Item 13a and 13b
10b: Scanning and observation	Integrated into Item 13a and 13b
10c: Prevention and intervention	Integrated into Item 13a or 13b
11: Missing person	Integrated into Item 12b
12a: Management of distressed or drowning victim	May evaluate as stand-alone or integrated into Item 13a or 13b
12b: Management of submerged, non-breathing victim	May evaluate as stand-alone or integrated into Item 13a or 13b
12c: Management of spinal-injured victims	May evaluate as stand-alone or integrated into Item 13a or 13b
12d: Management of an injured victim	May evaluate as stand-alone or integrated into Item 13a or 13b
13a: Single lifeguard situation	See designing situations below
13b: Lifeguard team situations	See designing situations below

DESIGNING SITUATIONS

- ❑ In lifeguard situations, scenarios may include any of the test items within the National Lifeguard options as applicable (e.g., public relations, drowning non-swimmer, submerged victim, spinal-injured victim, injured swimmer, facility emergency, environmental emergency missing person and specialized rescues). **First aid conditions are limited to those outlined in the National Lifeguard Award Guide Appendix A.**

- ❑ Situations should be simple, realistic and based on those commonly encountered by lifeguards in real life. Examiners will adapt scenarios to a pool or waterfront environment (e.g., heat exhaustion in a pool setting could be caused by sauna use versus sun exposure at a waterfront). Reference page viii in the National Lifeguard Award Guide.
- ❑ Recent statistics show that lifeguards most commonly deal with drowning non-swimmer and minor wound (nosebleeds, minor cuts and scrapes) interventions.
- ❑ When designing scenarios for specific user groups or facilities, ensure that locations (e.g. drownings tend to occur close to pool edges or drop offs unless off a piece of equipment) and situations (e.g., children are more likely to require a public relations intervention for a rule infraction; adult swimmers are more likely to suffer from a medical emergency; an allergy attack may be more realistic in an outdoor environment with a bee sting) are realistic.
- ❑ For National Lifeguard, situations that may/may not involve first aid treatments include:
 - Public relations (e.g., rule infractions, facility inquiries, unsupervised toddlers, missing person)
 - Facility emergencies (e.g., chlorine gas leak, power outage, fire alarm)
 - Environmental dangers (storm, cold weather/water, waves, rip tides, etc.)
- ❑ For National Lifeguard, each scenario set should include a DNS (minor or major), a wound management scenario and/or other first aid intervention (minor or major), a spinal-injured victim, a missing person scenario, and a public relations or facility/environmental emergency as identified on page 9.
- ❑ The design and number of minor and major emergencies needs to ensure that all candidates have an opportunity to demonstrate to the National Lifeguard standard.
- ❑ Design the majority of situations to occur in the water.
- ❑ Whenever possible, include a minimum of 10 simulated patrons in addition to the victim(s) for the evaluation of situations.

- ❑ *Alert* defines a minor and major emergency. The loss of patron supervision, a reduction in facility access or an event that endangers the safety of patrons or staff should be considered when determining the emergency type.
 - When a **minor** situation occurs, there is no loss of coverage and patrons are not restricted in their use of the facility. More than one lifeguard/assistant lifeguard may be needed to respond to the situation, but there are enough lifeguards/assistant lifeguards available to provide effective coverage and patrons still have reasonable access to the facility.
 - When a **major** situation occurs, coverage is compromised, deficient, or not adequate resulting in reduced or restricted access to areas of the facility or an evacuation of the facility.