

HOW CAN I BECOME A LIFEGUARD?

LIFEGUARDING IS A BIG RESPONSIBILITY, so a lot of training goes into it! Lifeguarding is a great way to connect with your community, change someone's life, or find a job that fits your active lifestyle. Anyone who works as a Lifeguard is legally required to have certain certifications.

When you complete a YMCA Lifeguard Certification class, **YOU WILL ACHIEVE FOUR SEPARATE CERTIFICATIONS:**

- Basic Life Support (1 Year)
- Basic First Aid (2 Years)
- Emergency Oxygen Administration (2 Years)
- YMCA LIFEGARD Certification (2 Years)

THE FIRST THREE ARE TAUGHT ONLINE through the American Safety and Health Institute (ASHI), with hands-on skills work and evaluation during your Lifeguarding class. All three ASHI certifications must be completed in order to finish your YMCA LIFEGARD Certification.

Here are the steps to register for and complete your lifeguard certification:

BEFORE THE CLASS

- **MUST BE AT LEAST 16** years of age by last date of class.
- **BE A STRONG SWIMMER.** If uncertain, practice the Physical Competency Requirements outlined on back.
- **CHECK YOUR CALENDAR.** 100% Class attendance is mandatory, so be sure to check the schedule for any potential conflicts before you commit to a class.
- **CREATE A STUDENT ACCOUNT** with the National Y's Learning and Career Development Center (LCDC) platform at <http://lcdc.yexchange.org>
- **REGISTER FOR YOUR CERTIFICATION** class on LCDC using a unique registration link provided by your instructor. Pay any applicable course fees directly to the Superior YMCA at least two weeks before first day of class.
- **COMPLETE ASHI ONLINE ASSIGNMENTS** for Basic Life Support, Basic First Aid, and Emergency Oxygen administration. Online training links are provided after registration is completed.

DURING THE CLASS

- **MUST ATTEND ALL CLASSES** according to schedule set by instructor. Total class time is approx. 36 hours, comprised of 18 hours of e-learning and 28 hours of in-class/in-pool instruction.
- **PASS THE PHYSICAL COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS.** This swim skills test is held on the first day of class. See back for details.
- **COMPLETE YMCA ONLINE ASSIGNMENTS** according to schedule provided by your instructor..
- **LEARN AND DEMONSTRATE ALL RESCUE SKILLS** covered in pool sessions. If you need extra practice time, you may use the Superior Y pools free of charge for the duration of the class.
- **PASS ALL WRITTEN EXAMS** with a score of 80% or better. ASHI exams are taken online. YMCA Lifeguard test is taken on the last day of class. Candidates must achieve at least 80% on each of 9 sections of YLG test.
- **PASS FINAL SKILLS TEST** on the last day of class. Instructor will evaluate scanning skills and team-rescue skills for both in-water and non-swimming rescues.

AFTER THE CLASS

- **PRINT OR DOWNLOAD** a copy of your certification for your new boss! You will receive your ASHI Certifications in an email from info@hsi.org. You can access your Lifeguard Certification on your LCDC account.
- **KEEP YOUR CERTIFICATIONS CURRENT.** Your Basic Life Support Certification is good for ONE YEAR. Basic Life Support must be renewed annually and submitted to LCDC to keep your YLG Certification in good standing. Emergency Oxygen, Basic First Aid, and Lifeguard certifications must be renewed every TWO YEARS.

LIFEGUARDS MUST BE STRONG SWIMMERS.

In order to take a lifeguard certification class, you must already be a strong enough swimmer to keep yourself above water, and have a kick strong enough to tow another person back to safety. This pre-requisite PHYSICAL COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT test is done on the first day and must be 100% completed in order to continue in the class.

PHASE 1

Tread water for 2 minutes
Swim 100 continuous yards of front crawl

PHASE 2

Swim 250 continuous yards, comprised of the following:
50 yards Front crawl with the head up
50 yards Sidestroke
50 yards Breaststroke
50 yards Breaststroke with the head up
50 yards Elementary backstroke kick with hands on the chest
Perform a feet first surface dive to the bottom in 9 feet of water, then swim underwater for 15 feet.

PHASE 3

Participants will start in the water at the shallow end and perform the following:

- Sprint for a distance of approximately 60 feet and then perform an arm-over-arm surface dive in 8 to 10 feet of water (or maximum depth of training facility).
- Pick up an object from the bottom of the pool, surface and tread water for at least 1 minute with legs only, holding the object out of the pool, and then replace the object back on the bottom of the pool where it was found.
- Surface and swim the remaining length to the end of the pool and hoist yourself out of water without using a ladder or other assistance.
- Immediately begin compression on an adult manikin for 1 minute or 100 compressions; stand and listen to directions from instructor.

OTHER PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Because Lifeguarding is a physically demanding job, a Lifeguard Candidate must also be able to accomplish the following:

Sit for extended periods of time in an elevated chair. A candidate must remain alert and focused on the entire zone of responsibility for extended periods of time, even under conditions of high heat and humidity, with no lapses in consciousness. Move safely to various locations, including entering and exiting an elevated chair, while scanning the zone of responsibility.

Communicate verbally when responding to an incident or an emergency. Candidates must be able to communicate with other immediately, including projecting their voice across distances; communicate swiftly and clearly with emergency personnel over the telephone and/or in person, and effectively give and receive directions.

Hear noises and distress signals in the aquatic environment, including in the water and anywhere around the zone of responsibility. Candidates must understand that significant background noise exists in all indoor and outdoor aquatic environments. In addition, lifeguard candidates should have a minimum hearing threshold of no more than an average of a 25-decibel loss in both ears over a range of frequencies (500Hz, 1000Hz, 2000Hz, 788 and 3000Hz). Candidates who use hearing aids or other corrective devices for hearing should be able to perform all rescue skills and emergency procedures without interruptions to adjust, retrieve or install or attach hearing aid/corrective device.

Be able to see and observe all sections of an area of responsibility. Candidates who use corrective eyewear should be able to perform all rescue skills and emergency procedures without interruptions to adjust, clear, or retrieve corrective eyewear.