

City of Lyons

Lifeguard Handbook

Welcome

We are excited you have taken on the role of lifeguard with City of Lyons. It is our hope you find this experience enjoyable, rewarding, safe and full of life experiences you can learn and grow from. In order to help you accomplish that, the City of Lyons has developed this handbook as a guide to make you successful in your position with us. Many of the items listed below come directly from your training as a lifeguard while others are common sense practices the City relies on to make a safe and secure environment for our patrons and lifeguards. Paying close attention to this information will help us achieve our goal and make this summer experience here at the pool a positive one.

Once you have thoroughly read the material in this handbook, please sign the acknowledgement page at the back of the booklet and return it to the pool manager. Even as a returning lifeguard, it is important for you to review the information below as it could have changed from last year. If at some point you are unsure about a particular aspect of the information provided, please do not hesitate to speak with the pool manager, utility superintendent or city clerk.

Again, it is the goal of the City for our swimmers, families, guest and lifeguards to have a great experience while at our pool. By working together and meeting these expectations, this swimming season will be the best one yet!

Primary Responsibilities of the Lifeguard

The lifeguard's primary responsibility when on duty is to provide a safe and healthy environment to our swimmers, families and guests. The lifeguard is not only responsible for those individuals in the pool but for all patrons located within the pool area. If there are swimmers in the pool, lifeguards must be lifeguarding. If swimmers are present, designated lifeguards will be in their lifeguarding chairs or standing in designated spots around the pool deck (as determined by the pool supervisor). This does not mean you will be in the pool, pool house (unless on break) or pump room. You will be vigilant in your observations of the pool and surround area. In order to stay vigilant in your observation duties, you are not to engage in lengthy conversations with pool guests. Your goal is to keep pool patrons safe and that is more difficult to do with unnecessary distractions. The pool manager should have a lifeguard rotation schedule that prevents fatigue and loss of concentration.

In the event of a water rescue, it is important to remember your rescue tube. This will help both you and the victim complete a safe and successful encounter. When involved in a water rescue, the expectation is you will take a few extra seconds to descend the lifeguard ladder before entering the water. Jumping or diving directly into the water from the lifeguard chair can cause injury to the lifeguard. The last thing we want is for the lifeguard to injury his/herself attempting a water rescue. The result of which would be two individuals in peril instead of one. Please take the time to climb down the lifeguard chair ladder and enter the water from the pool deck.

Finally, your actions while on duty will be a direct reflection on how our swimmers behave. If you act or look unprofessional, our guest will believe it is fine to act unruly. Your job is a serious one and you must take it that way. If you as lifeguards are engaged in horseplay, the greenlight has been given for our guests as well. This isn't the case of "do as I say, not as I do" but rather, "do as I do". To gain respect you need to give it. Rules must be enforced consistently and must be done in a professional manner. As lifeguards, the younger patrons look up to you when you behave in a consistent and professional manner. Adults at the pool will do the same.

Code of Conduct

The code of conduct is a set of expectations set by the Lyons City Council in order to help provide guidance and clarity to the set of standards we wish to achieve as a municipal pool authority. Not upholding these standards is grounds for disciplinary action including but not limited to counseling, suspension, or immediate dismissal. Although not all inclusive, this list contains many of our most important expectations as a Council to engage in:

- Don't Steal: don't take or allowing someone else to take or use pool property without permission; don't clock in with the expectation of being paid but not work those hours; don't knowingly withholding information regarding theft of pool property.
- Don't do Drugs or Alcohol: Don't come to work possessing or under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol or improper use of prescription medication. This is cause for immediate termination.
- Don't leaving early, arrive consistently late or not show up at all for an assigned shift without manager authorization. Leaving your assigned post without authorization from your supervisor or refusing to accept an assigned post can also result in disciplinary action.
- Don't engage in outside criminal activity.
- Don't let friends or family into the pool without payment. Don't enter the pool during non-pool hours unless authorized to do so by your manager.
- Have a good attitude: Poor conduct on your part in and outside pool hours can have a direct reflection on the reputation of the pool.

- Don't engage in chewing tobacco, smoking, or spitting while on duty.
- Avoid Profane or Offensive Language: this includes mean-spirited gossip, offensive gestures or abuse language to both fellow team members and patrons.
- Wear an appropriate, city approved uniform when on duty. Always carry your whistle as you can always enforce safety guidelines even when not in a lifeguard chair.
- Enforce all posted pool rules and regulations consistently, in a clear and even tone.
- When on duty, make sure you are sitting in the lifeguard chairs for maximum viewing capacity. Those areas, such as diving wells, should always be monitored due to blind spots and water depth.
- Keep safety equipment within arm's reach when on duty. We want you to be able to respond quickly and appropriately to a safety emergency.
- When swimmers are in the pool, you will be in the lifeguard chair constantly watching for any potential safety concerns.
- Keep your original Lifeguard Training, First Aid, CPR and Pool Operator with you and a copy in the files in the pool house.
- Come ready to work. Be well-rested, in a positive mood, in uniform, suitable for work. If you are not, you will be sent home and not allowed to return to work until you have spoken with the pool manager.
- Leave your cell phones in the pool house. Do not have them in your possession when actively lifeguarding. Cell phones may only be checked during your break times. This includes text messaging, voice mails, emails, and internet. Phones are a major distraction and impede lifeguards from performing their basic safety functions.
- Not sleeping on the job.
- Don't harass others: Harassment of any kind, including horseplay, threatening behavior, sexual, or fighting is prohibited.

Customer Service & Hospitality

First impressions are lasting impressions. How you present yourself – the way you look, act, talk, etc. – is a direct reflection on how the public will perceive you and their experience at the pool. Our pool guests should be treated as the most important people at our pool. You want to treat others as you would want to be treated yourself.

Your professional attitude is the first line of defense in dealing with the public. The more you show respect the more respect you will receive. When dealing with an upset or angry guest, the following tips can be used to effectively resolve the conflict you might be having:

- Allow the pool guest to vent their frustration.
- Empathize with the individual.
- Accept responsibility.
- Ask questions to help you figure out what the issue(s) are.
- Actively listen to what the individual is saying to you.

- Offer suggestions or solutions in a positive manner.
- Talk to the pool manager if you are not able to resolve the issue yourself or don't know how to best handle the situation.
- Follow-up to make sure the solution is carried out.
- Smile and be friendly.

Guidelines for a Safe and Accident-Free Environment

The lifeguard's primary responsibility is keeping our pool guest safe while enjoying our pool and its amenities. This means it is important that you make sure the pool and surrounding areas are free of hazards. A responsible lifeguard must follow these guidelines:

- Sit in the lifeguard chairs or in the assigned area whenever there are pool guests in the pool or on the deck.
- Actively monitor the pool at all times.
- Call scheduled breaks on time to allow you to have a break from constantly observing pool activity and to give the children an opportunity to rest.
- Never leave the pool deck when guests are on the deck or in the pool.
- Consistently enforce the pool rules.
- If you are working the pool house, make sure you are paying attention to incoming guests and not visiting with friends or fellow lifeguards. Don't leave the desk unattended.

Pool Managers and Lifeguards are to perform the following pool duties when necessary:

- Check pool equipment, including ladders, diving board, to make sure they are secured to the pool.
- Walk the pool deck picking up trash, cleaning up spills, looking for lost or left items or anything you feel could be a potential hazard to guests or other lifeguards (i.e. sharp edges, broken glass, and broken pool furniture, damaged fence, bees' nests).
- Keep decks clear of standing water to avoid slippery areas or potential black algae breeding grounds.
- Be sure pool equipment is properly stored when not in use.
- Check the bathrooms at least hourly to make sure they are clean, properly stocked and free from any hazards.
- When in the pool look for issues within the pool itself. Report and rough areas on the pool bottom, missing water return covers or vacuum lines without caps on them.

Chemical Safety

- Due to the dangerous nature of pool chemicals, only authorized personnel are allowed in the filter house where pool chemicals are used and stored. Authorized personnel include the pool managers and city street personnel. Chemicals must be properly labeled and stored in the filter house. Chemicals are not to be left out on the pool deck. Chemicals should not be mixed.

Uniforms & Appearance

- It is our goal that our pool guests know who the lifeguards are while they are on duty. A professional appearance not only helps guest to identify who the lifeguards are but it also gives our guests a sense of comfort and security knowing that our guards take pride in their work by looking and acting professional when on duty. Lifeguards must come to work in a clean and neat appearance and in uniform. A lifeguard uniform consists of an appropriate bathing suit with a red lifeguard tank top with white lettering. Whistles are also a required part of the lifeguard uniform. The city will purchase one (1) lifeguard tank top for every lifeguard. Additional tank tops may be purchased by the lifeguard themselves.
- Necklaces, bracelets, body jewelry, facial piercings, hoop earrings, or large earrings are NOT allowed and should be removed before the beginning of your shift.
- Please cover any visible tattoos that may be read as inappropriate to the general public, as this does present itself in a professional manner.
- Guards may wear a wristwatch but cell phones should be left in the pool house.
- Unacceptable swim suits include suits that are low cut (whether they read LIFEGUARD or not), female suits that have string ties, thong bikinis, speedos, or other types of shorts including soccer shorts, basketball shorts, mesh shorts, or jean shorts.

Scheduling

- Because the lifeguarding position is a seasonal position, there is no paid time off, holiday pay or overtime pay. Working weekends is considered part of the job as is working on the 4th of July.
- The pool managers will decide on a lifeguard work schedule and give that to you in advance.
- If you need time off for any reason, (vacation, sport's camp, etc.) please let the pool manager know well in advance of the requested time off. This will allow them time to make sure the schedule is complete.

- If for any reason you need to alter your schedule after it has been posted, it is your responsibility to find your own replacement. You are expected to work the shift until coverage has been found.
- It is the city's wish that the pool be open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. We encourage all lifeguards to work to the end of the season. However, we understand that towards the end of summer lifeguards are returning to high school or going off to college. The pool hours will be adjusted with lifeguard availability.

Time Clock and Meal Breaks

- In order for you to be paid for the hours you work, the city keeps track of the hours you are on duty. There is a time clock located in the pool house for you to clock in and out with. It is your responsibility to clock in when you arrive for work and clock out when you leave at the end of your shift. If you leave the pool for a meal break, you must clock in and out.

Payroll

- Payroll periods begin on Monday and cover the following two weeks, including that Sunday. Managers will submit time cards to the city office after the two weeks for processing. Your payroll check will be direct deposited into your bank account the following Tuesday. You will receive a payroll receipt in the mail confirming the number of hours you worked and the amount you earned for that pay period.
- If you find a discrepancy with your paycheck you have received, please visit with your manager so they can report it to the city office.
- Remember that certain deductions may be taken from your paycheck. These deductions usually come in the form of taxes, social security and unemployment.

Cell Phones

- Your personal cell phone should be turned off and stored in a secured location while at work. Cell phone use is only permitted during breaks and never when out on the pool deck. Work hours are not a time to be chatting with friends looking at Facebook or surfing the internet, so if you should make a personal call or text do it quickly and return your cell phone, in the off position, to its secure location.

Bathrooms

- Bathroom cleaning is part of the lifeguard's job. We don't always like it but it must be done. The bathrooms should look and smell clean all the time. If you cannot clean bathrooms or are unwilling to learn, PLEASE DON'T BE A LIFEGUARD! Each day the bathrooms need to be cleaned thoroughly at least once. Cleaning the bathroom involves:
 - Sweeping and mopping
 - Re-stocking paper products and soap
 - Cleaning toilets and shower stalls
 - Wiping down stalls, mirrors and sinks with appropriate cleaning products
 - Emptying trash cans, cleaning them and replacing the liners
 - Reporting any "out of order" toilets/sinks to the pool manager
- Bathroom checks are to be completed on a regular basis throughout the shift. If something needs to be cleaned during that inspection, clean it right then. Everyone uses the bathrooms and expects them to be clean at all times, so please take the time to ensure that they stay that way throughout the day.

Trash

- Trash should be removed daily to keep bees and insects away from the pool area. It is very important that you know the trash is to be taken to the dumpster at the end of the day.
- The pool deck, especially the food court, should be inspected for trash constantly and picked up and thrown away.
- Open-faced trashcans should be moved under the pool house eave when raining.

Daily Pool Upkeep

Procedure when Opening the Pool:

- Clock-In
- Managers will get all their chemical readings
- Check the bathrooms and make sure they are cleaned and stocked
- Clean the pool skimmers
- Check the water level. If low, contact the city crew to investigate
- Ensure all of the chairs are lined up and the backs are either all down or all up
- Put any umbrellas up
- Skim the pool and bring to vacuum

Procedure when Closing the Pool:

- Clean the bathrooms (if required to do so)
- Take out the trash
- Line up all the chairs and place the backs either up or down
- Put all the books, test kit and telephone away. Turn off radio and shut off lights
- Lock all doors
- Clock-Out

General Swimming Rules and Regulations

- See the attached rules provided to all pool guests

Reasons for Closing the Pool

- The water is cloudy, green or you are unable to see the main pool drain.
- Feces or vomit is found in the pool.
- There is a large amount of blood in the pool.
- The health inspector closes the pool.
- The Chlorine level is not at acceptable levels.
- The filter system is not working or working properly.
- Weather Conditions stated below:
 - If the air temperature does not reach 65 degrees by 3pm, the pool will close and not reopen for the day.
 - Thunder: If thunder is heard, lifeguards will clear the pool but allow guests to remain on deck. Pool guests will be allowed to reenter the water 30 minutes after the last round of thunder is heard.
 - Lightning: If lightning is seen, the pool and pool deck will be cleared to inside the pool house and no one will be permitted back into the pool area until an hour after the last lightning strike or flash is seen.

- Rain: Rain in and of itself does not present any real threat to swimmers. Thus the pool will remain open even if it is raining. However, if the rain becomes heavy enough to impede the lifeguards' ability to monitor the pool effectively, guest will be asked to exist the pool until the rain lets up.
- If any of these conditions occur, please contact the pool manager on duty immediately and report any of these issues to the City Street Superintendent and city office.

Harassment Policy

It is the policy of the City of Lyons, Nebraska ("City") to provide an environment free of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct or communication constituting sexual harassment. The purpose of the policy statement is to establish clearly and unequivocally that the City prohibits sexual harassment (or harassment based on age, disability, race, color, religion, national origin, veteran's status or marital status) by and of its' employees and to set forth procedures by which allegations of such harassment may be raised, investigated and resolved.

Sex or other types of illegal harassment are a form of employee misconduct, which interferes with work productivity and wrongfully deprives employees of the opportunity to work in an environment free from unsolicited and unwelcome sexual favors and other such verbal or physical misconduct. Sexual harassment is a prohibited personnel practice and is a violation of the law.

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued guidelines interpreting Section 703 of Title VII as prohibiting sex harassment. Sexual harassment is defined in those guidelines as follows:

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical misconduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when:

- 1) Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment.
- 2) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or
- 3) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.

It shall be a violation of this City's policy to harass another employee sexually or to permit the harassment of an employee by a non-employee. Harassment may take many forms, including

but not limited to:

- 1) Verbal harassment or abuse based on a person's sex, race, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status or veteran's status.
- 2) Subtle pressure or requests for sexual activity.
- 3) Unnecessary touching of an individual, e.g., patting, pinching, hugging, repeated brushing against another employee's body.
- 4) Requesting or demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's employment status; or
- 5) Requesting or demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promise of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment status.

Any employee who feels he or she has been subjected to harassment has several ways to make his or her concerns known:

- 1) Aggrieved persons who feel comfortable doing so should directly inform the person engaging in the harassing conduct or communication that such conduct or communication is offensive and must stop.
- 2) If an aggrieved person does not wish to communicate directly with the person whose conduct or communication is offensive or if direct communication with the offending party has been unavailing, the aggrieved employee should contact his or her supervisor or the offending party's supervisor.
- 3) Aggrieved employees alleging either harassment by anyone with supervisory authority or the failure of a supervisor to take immediate action on the employee's complaint may communicate with other supervisory personnel or communicate directly with the City's Mayor.

The complaint will be promptly and confidentially (to the extent possible) investigated. Appropriate action will be taken based on the results of the investigation. Regardless of the means selected for resolving the problem, the initiation of a complaint of harassment will not cause any reflection of the complainant nor will it affect such person's future business dealings with the City, his or her employment, compensation or work assignments.

Wrap Up

This lifeguard handbook should help you with some of the basic questions you have regarding your position. If there is anything that you feel hasn't been covered, please don't hesitate to contact the city clerk's office. Use common sense at all times and always err on the side of caution. Get to know your pool guests so you can build a personal/professional relationship to assist you trust and communication. Most importantly, keep the pool safe and clean and when you accomplish that you'll find working at the pool is a lot of fun. The pool and the city's reputation is built on creating an environment where both our guests and our pool team feel comfortable, welcomed, respected and safe. You are now part of the team that can make it all happen. We look forward to an outstanding and fun pool season. Welcome to the team!