



Modifying swimming lessons for swimmers with different abilities

Teaching swimming lessons to swimmers with varying abilities can be overwhelming. However, if you're prepared, it can be a great experience! Use these tips to help ensure everyone has a good time in class.

Set realistic expectations

Talk to your swimmer and their caregiver(s) to set realistic expectations. For some, it may mean that it will take longer or require more practice to achieve a skill, which is perfectly fine as everyone learns at their own pace.

Read the Purpose Statements

The Society recognizes that some individuals may be unable to achieve all the must-sees, but if they can complete the item with modifications safely or can achieve the purpose statement, then you may consider that a "pass." If you have questions about the must sees or purpose statements, speak with your Deck Supervisor for support in modifying the requirements to ensure that the appropriate material is taught.

Ensure safety

To help reinforce appropriate behaviours during swim lessons, remind swimmers of rules every class, and ensure that there are clear and well-defined expectations. Sometimes, a swimmer may be non-responsive to verbal direction or forget the pool rules, so in that case, try talking to the individual's caregiver(s) about ideas and suggestions that work at home.

Try rewards and games

Swimmers are often motivated by rewards. Here are some ways you can modify rewards and games to suit adapted participants:

- When using rewards, be clear about which action earns which reward. For example, if a participant does 5 bobs, then they get to go down the slide 2 times.
- Speak with caregiver(s) about what reward systems they use at home.
- Play lots of games! Use them to make your classes fun and to reinforce the skills participants need to succeed!

Teaching swimmers with different abilities requires a little extra preparation and flexibility, but it can turn out to be very fun and rewarding! With these tips, you can manage it confidently! For extra information, please consult our [Inclusion Policy](#).

SAVE THE DATE!

Our 117th Annual General Meeting will be held on April 10, 2026, at the Hilton Toronto/Markham Suites Conference Centre and Spa.



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High-visibility lifeguard uniforms in distinctive red and yellow – international lifeguard colours. Singlets, T-shirts or long-sleeved shirts, shorts and hats.

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Give the Gift of Drowning Prevention

As members of the Lifesaving Society, you know the value of water safety and the impact of our work toward our mission of drowning prevention. This holiday season – or to mark a birthday, retirement, or special milestone – consider giving a gift that truly makes a difference: a donation to the Lifesaving Society.

Your gift in someone's honour helps extend the reach of our programs, allowing us to develop more tools for Water Smart® education, teach more children to swim and ensure communities across Ontario have the programs they need to stay safe in, on, and around water.

It's a meaningful way to celebrate the people in your life while helping to continue the lifesaving work we all care deeply about. Celebrate with purpose. Give the gift of lifesaving. [Donate here.](#)



2025 ONTARIO NON-FATAL DROWNING REPORT

In Ontario, non-fatal drowning results in an average of 585 emergency department visits each year. Non-fatal drowning is approximately four times more common than fatal drowning. *The 2025 Ontario Non-Fatal Drowning Report* provides an up-to-date snapshot of drowning-related emergency department visits and hospitalizations within the province. This data help us better understand the true burden of drowning in Ontario, including who is most at risk.

[Read the report here.](#)

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UPDATED NL RECERTIFICATION NOTES FOR EXAMINERS NOW AVAILABLE

The *National Lifeguard Recertification Notes* for Examiners were updated and are now available on the [Lifesaving Society website](#) in English and French. All National Lifeguard Examiners must use the updated notes for any National Lifeguard Recertification taking place on or after January 1, 2026. Ensure you're reviewing the latest version so you're prepared. If you have any questions, please email [Marek Holke](#).



MAKE WAVES WITH YOUR IMPACT: SUBMIT FOR THE 2025 WATER SMART® AWARD

Did you make a big splash in drowning prevention this year? From poolside programs to lakeside lessons, if your organization brought Water Smart messages to your community in creative, fun, and powerful ways, it's your time to shine! Apply now for the 2025 Water Smart Award and get the recognition your team deserves. The **submission deadline is January 15, 2026**. [Learn more and apply here](#).



ATTENTION ALL TRAINERS!

The *In-person Instructor Recertification Award Guide* has been revised and will soon be available in the Leadership Library. Trainers must use the updated Award Guide for any In-person Instructor Recertification courses taking place on or after January 1, 2026. If you have any questions, please email [Sindy Parsons](#).



2026 SOCIETY PRICE LIST

[Click here](#) to view the 2026 price list for Lifesaving Society Ontario course materials, programs, awards, affiliate fees and more.



E-SIGNATURES NOW ACCEPTED ON TEST SHEETS

You asked, we listened. We're now accepting e-signatures on test sheets, making it easier than ever to submit your documentation quickly and securely.



HOW-TO VIDEOS ARE HERE TO HELP!

Need help creating an account? Struggling to recertify? Our new how-to videos can help! They walk you through every step. [Watch them on YouTube here](#).

Do you have suggestions for more videos? [Let us know!](#)

Host a TeleGames in your community

Want to participate in a Lifesaving Sport competition from the comfort of your own facility? Then TeleGames is what you need! Hosting a TeleGames event in your community offers an energetic and unique approach to the sport, blending practical lifesaving skills with the excitement of competition, all without the logistical overhead. These events make a positive impact on both participants and the community at large.

Simple, flexible implementation

TeleGames are designed for ease and adaptability. You can integrate them into regularly scheduled practices or run them as standalone meets. Facilities can select from a menu of events and timing formats to suit their resources and members' ages, and the cost per competitor is low, covering registration, awards and administrative support. Your results are forwarded to the scoring centre, where results from all participating affiliates are compiled and tallied, helping your athletes feel part of a much larger event.

Increase engagement and participation

TeleGames create a unique draw for your membership by transforming routine aquatic programming into lively, goal-driven events that excite youth and encourage consistent attendance. By offering four seasonal TeleGames, your pool can keep participants active all year, driving repeat visits that can help stabilize usage and fill underused time slots.

Skill building through sport

Each TeleGames session offers events that appeal to a variety of interests and strengths. Competitors can enter challenges such as the Lifesaving Medley, Manikin Carry, Obstacle Swim, and Throwing Accuracy, learning important rescue and swimming skills along the way. Team relays further encourage cooperation and foster club spirit, while all age groups and abilities are included through carefully designed event categories.

Enhanced community engagement

From coaching to timing to officiating, TeleGames create many opportunities for volunteer involvement. Parents and community members get to play meaningful roles in supporting youth, promoting drowning prevention and strengthening connections beyond the pool deck.

Are you ready to compete?

Bringing TeleGames to your town means making aquatic sport, lifesaving skills, and teamwork available to everyone while fostering local pride within your club. Learn more about TeleGames [on our website](#). And while you're on the site, check out the [Lifesaving Sport calendar](#) to see all upcoming events, including 2026 Provincial Championships!

LAUNCH A LIFEJACKET LENDING PROGRAM

Buoyed by the success of our Lifejacket Contribution Program in 2025, the Lifesaving Society is excited to offer the program again in 2026. If your community would benefit from starting or expanding a lifejacket lending program, we want to help!

Apply to the Lifejacket Contribution Program to receive up to nine adult-sized, Transport Canada-approved lifejackets for your local lending program. Successful applicants pay shipping and are expected to match the donation with an equal number of new, Transport Canada-approved infant, child, or youth lifejackets. Get all the details [on our website](#).



Your name, your identity – Update in progress

As part of our commitment to fostering inclusive environments, we're reviewing our Change of Name Policy and associated processes to better support member needs, including how we collect and use names in our systems and communications.

We recognize that for many individuals, the name on their legal identification may not reflect their lived identity. Our policies are designed to protect public safety and the integrity of our certifications, not to exclude or discriminate.

Submit your preferred name

At this time, you can complete a Member Account Update Form to add a preferred name to our member system and email the completed form to experts@lifeguarding.com. We will track your preferred name in our member database and use it when communicating with you.

[View the full policy on our website.](#)

Verification of Identity Policy updates to support our affiliates

After reviewing the Verification of Identity Policy originally communicated on July 31, 2025, and consulting with instructors, affiliates, and other parties, we are making several important updates to better support program delivery in across aquatic settings.

These changes are designed to enhance flexibility for affiliates while continuing to uphold the integrity and standards of our courses.

Summary of key changes

- Attestation Form removed: The requirement to submit an attestation form has been eliminated.
- Original, copy, or digital copies now accepted: You may now use a copy of identification documents.

These updates aim to streamline the verification process and reduce administrative barriers, especially in remote or resource-limited environments.

[View the policy on our website.](#)

New Prestan Ultralite 12-Pack

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Making a Splash

Bundling programs in the City of Guelph

Becoming a lifeguard and/or swim instructor requires a serious commitment of time, money and dedication. The City of Guelph knows this well and saw an opportunity to make the process more affordable, straightforward and efficient. They created the Aquatics Leadership Academy to help aspiring aquatic staff in their community become certified and build knowledge, skills and competence in and around the pool.

The Academy launched in March 2025. For a one-time fee of \$300, participants can register for all five core leadership courses (Bronze Medallion, Bronze Cross, Standard First Aid, National Lifeguard, and Swim and Lifesaving Instructor). The fee is a fraction of the cost of registering for each course individually and also includes access to lane swims and drop-in skill development sessions, allowing candidates to practise and get real-time feedback from instructors.

The program has seen great success and has already created a pipeline for the City of Guelph to hire qualified individuals at their pools. "The program has welcomed 285 participants since its launch, with several already joining our aquatics team," says Breann R., Recreation Supervisor, Aquatics. "As the Academy grows, we look forward to training even more enthusiastic individuals who will help deliver high-quality aquatic programs across our recreation centres."

One graduate, Nora, raved about her experience. "The Academy saved me so much money and made it easier to finish my certifications faster. The included lane swims helped me keep up my endurance, and the entire process was more efficient and affordable," she said. "I highly recommend it to anyone considering becoming a lifeguard or instructor."

Guelph's Aquatics Leadership Academy has proven to be a great way to enhance the Society's programming and engage its community. The Academy is open to anyone aged 13 or older, and registration for the courses must be completed before March 2027.

July 19-25, 2026

National Drowning Prevention Week

LIFESAVING SOCIETY



Two Academy candidates, Adish and Bronwyn, are completing the Swim and Lifesaving Instructors course.