

# Lifeguard Manual 2022



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## *Welcome, Lifeguards!*

We are proud to have you as a member of our Nationally Accredited Westchester County Parks Department staff. You have been chosen from a field of many qualified applicants, and we believe you will do an excellent job serving the needs of our patrons and the department as a Westchester County lifeguard.



We have always taken pride in our employees' ability to ensure the safety of our patrons. Our lifeguards are ambassadors for the department: they are courteous and knowledgeable, know when to take charge, and are fully aware of rules, regulations and policies and how to enforce them politely and effectively. When in doubt, the chain of command is essential to the successful operation of any aquatic facility. When situations arise for which you feel you need additional assistance, activate the chain of command by contacting the lieutenant, captain or designated person in charge.

We want you to be proud to wear a Westchester County lifeguard uniform and recognize the importance of your responsibilities. Your work helps our patrons to have safe and enjoyable outings at our facilities.

The attached manual will serve as your guide as a lifeguard. Please read it thoroughly now and refer to it as often as needed.

Once again, welcome to the Westchester County lifeguard team!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen O'Connor". The script is fluid and cursive.

Kathleen M. O'Connor  
Commissioner

## **INTRODUCTION**

Westchester County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation employs lifeguards at various beaches and pools throughout the Westchester County Parks system. These lifeguards are expected to enforce and abide by all the rules and regulations set forth by the Westchester County Parks Department. In addition, while you're employed, there may be other related rules and regulations, both general and specific, that may be issued orally or written. This manual was prepared to acquaint you with the rules and regulations of the Westchester County Department of Parks Aquatic Facilities. This lifeguard manual will help you acclimate yourself to the working conditions that prevail.

You are expected to conduct yourself in a professional manner. This will indicate satisfaction with your job and pride in your park. You are to exercise every reasonable care to avoid causing injury to patrons of the park or any of your fellow employees, as well as taking all reasonable precautions toward protecting yourself from injury by avoiding exposure to unnecessary danger.

Alertness, quick thinking and foresight, plus swimming ability and physical fitness are attributes of efficient lifeguards today. They try to prevent accidents. But when an accident happens, they know how to meet the situation in the most effective manner. Constant vigilance, common sense, tact, sound judgment, and adherence to the rules and regulations will go far toward ensuring the safety of swimmers and patrons. You are to handle the patrons with civility, firmness, courtesy, and the least amount of policing and regimentation.

You are to recognize that any failure on your part to live up to the conditions of employment of conduct as set forth herein will subject you to rigid disciplinary action or immediate dismissal.

**As a Westchester County lifeguard you can be scheduled to work at any of our pools or beaches at any time.**

## **GENERAL LIFEGUARD PROCEDURES**

### **CHAIN OF COMMAND**

The following shall be the chain of command within the facility:

- a) Park Superintendent, Recreation Supervisor or Pool and Beach Facility Manager
- b) Assistant Superintendent, Foreman, Assistant Facility Manager or Park Superintendent's designee
- c) Captain
- d) Lieutenant
- e) Designated lifeguard

### **WORKING HOURS/SCHEDULING**

All facilities are open from 11 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Lifeguards will be asked to come in before their scheduled time of work for in-service training. Lifeguards shall be assigned to a continuous seven-hour shift of duty. Lunch periods of one half-hour are included. All guards shall be ready for duty promptly at their scheduled time. If guards want to leave the facility they must ask permission from the officer on duty as well as the superintendent. If yes, guards must sign out and upon return sign back in.

A **full-time lifeguard's** work week consists of 40 hours. A lifeguard will be paid for 40 hours provided they are available, scheduled and there is available work for them to do. Example: pool closed due to weather conditions. Lifeguards will only report if there is appropriate work available. Weekends and 4th of July are required.

A **part-time lifeguard's** A part time schedule is available for those who are interested in working only part time. Weekends and holidays are still required for part-time lifeguards. This will be based on the needs of the facility and at the discretion of the superintendent.

**\*\* Schedules are made based on need and age of lifeguards to adhere with the Labor laws\*\***

1. Schedules will be made in advance by the Captain and Lieutenants.
2. All time off must be requested in advance through the officers at your home facility.

3. Please follow your officer's instructions on requesting time off or any schedule changes.
4. Any call outs will be recorded on your evaluations.
5. A lifeguard is expected to work for the entire season; beaches: Memorial Day to Labor Day; pools: mid-June to Labor Day. Any deviation from this needs to be communicated to the Park Superintendent/Manager. A lifeguard's last day of work needs to be communicated to the Captain/Lieutenant at least three weeks prior to the guard's departure.
6. A guard who, for good and sufficient reason, finds it necessary to be absent from work must speak directly to their superintendent and officer on duty by 8 a.m. Excessive absences and failure to report will be cause for disciplinary action or dismissal. Point of contact to be provided at orientation.
7. In the event that someone does not show up for work without calling, they ***shall not*** be paid anything for that day.
8. If a facility is closed at any time other than prior to its scheduled opening time, staff will be paid for the ***amount of hours worked only***, up until the time the facility was closed.

### **Exception**

- A minimal number of lifeguards to perform pool/beach maintenance if deemed necessary by the Parks Superintendent will be paid for the hours worked.

### **WEATHER POLICY**

All lifeguards are expected to report to work regardless of the weather condition unless a message is sent.

### **Heatwave Procedure**

A heatwave is defined as three or more consecutive days of 90°+ temperature. The Health Department decides when to place this procedure into effect. Each facility designated may remain open one hour beyond our normal scheduled closing time, i.e., until 7:30 p.m. (the time of sunset plays a factor as to safe lighting). Lifeguards will be required to work this extra hour if a heatwave is declared. Police coverage or additional police coverage will be brought in as needed. Lifeguard hours will be staggered if necessary and Learn to Swim may be postponed if necessary.

## EXPECTATIONS

### NOT IN CHAIR

Lifeguards not on rotation **MUST REMEMBER** that they are **ON DUTY** and must be available to respond to an emergency and must subscribe to all regulations.

### CUSTOMER SERVICE

A guard must try to answer all questions of patrons intelligently and politely. Please remember the following when speaking to patrons: smile, be patient and tolerant, and be attentive to all people you come in contact with. If stationed, you will direct questions to the lifeguard captain. If uninformed concerning the correct answer, you should direct the patron to an employee who can supply the information. A guard should refer all serious complaints from patrons to their **Park Superintendent or the Facility Manager on duty.**

### LOST/FOUND

A guard will immediately turn in any found articles to the park office. Any guard guilty of dishonesty in not returning lost articles will be immediately discharged.

### EMERGENCIES

The police will be called to assist in all cases of disturbances or infractions of rules that require more than a courteous warning. A guard is never to **threaten** or use force on any patron. Anytime the police are called to the scene, the chain of command **MUST** be notified **and the police will then deal with the patron.**

### UNIFORM

The provided uniform must be worn on duty at all times - no exceptions. Lifeguards are responsible for coming to work with a complete county-issued uniform (this includes whistle and masks). Unprepared lifeguards will be sent home to retrieve their uniforms. A guard shall see that their uniform is in good shape (No alterations are to be made).

- a) All guards shall be in uniform when handling any piece of life-saving equipment.
- b) Whistles are to be worn at all times while on duty. Lifeguards are responsible for replacing lost or stolen equipment.
- c) Lifeguards choosing to wear hats must wear only those issued by the county, and hats may not be worn backwards or altered in any way. Nothing else may be worn!
- d) No new tattoos during the season.

- e) Acceptable jewelry: small rings, class rings, wedding bands, engagement rings, watches (waterproof).
- f) Only one ring per hand with exception of wedding set. One petite post stud earring per ear is acceptable. A stud constitutes a simple inconspicuous gold, silver or colored ear post, not to exceed the size of a nickel. No tongue rings, nose rings or exposed body piercings are permitted. No visible necklaces or bracelets are permitted (it's permissible to be able to see the necklaces on the side of the neck only).
- g) When a guard is to report, they must be at their post with all necessary rescue equipment ready for use.
- h) No sneakers allowed on chair.

## **EVALUATIONS**

Each lifeguard will be evaluated twice during the season, once mid-season and again at the end of the season. The evaluations will be based on attendance, ability to perform duties, skill competency and initiative among other things. We use the evaluations to determine things such as raises and promotions.

## **PAY DAY**

Pay day is every two weeks. Please see your captain for clarification on pay schedule and sign-in sheets.

## **DRUG FREE WORKPLACE**

At no time will a lifeguard report for duty under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Any consumption of alcohol, any controlled substance or any substance that impairs your judgement while on duty will result in immediate termination (hangovers are considered under the influence).

All lifeguards are subject to pre-employment and random drug testing.

## **CELL PHONE/HAND HELD ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Smart phones, cell phones, smartwatches and all other electronic and personal communication devices are prohibited while you are on duty. They may not be in your possession. Use of such electronics shall be cause for dismissal.



## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

Social media use (postings, photographs, videos, blogs or in any other form) during work hours is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to employees wearing a uniform/ID either on or off duty at the park or when off county property. Social media use concerning work matters is also prohibited on or off duty. Work matters are to be brought to the attention of your supervisor.

## **PUBLIC RELATIONS/MEDIA**

When questioned by the public, lifeguard responses should be based on fact, such as water temperature or tidal information. If you are not sure of the answer, you should refer the person to your captain or other supervisory personnel. Under no circumstances should a guess or incomplete information be given. All inquiries by the press or media should be directed to supervisory personnel. The lifeguard should be helpful and courteous in referring the person to the proper supervisor at all times.

## **LOCATIONS**

As a county lifeguard, you will be assigned to a home facility but will at some point be asked to report to a different facility to work. While each facility is different we strive to run them all similarly.

### **Beaches:**

Croton Point - 1A Croton Ave., Croton on Hudson, NY 10520

Glen Island - Weyman Ave., New Rochelle, NY 10805

### **Pools:**

Saxon Woods - 1800 Mamaroneck Ave., White Plains, NY 10605

Tibbetts Brook - 355 Midland Ave., Yonkers, NY 10704

Sprain Ridge - 149 Jackson Ave., Yonkers, NY 10705

Wilson's Woods - 8 Bradford Road, Mount Vernon, NY 10553

## **RULE ENFORCEMENT**

All of our pools and beaches have the same rules. On the following page, you will find the rules which are posted at each facility. As a lifeguard you are required to enforce these rules. If you ever have any questions about any of the rules, please speak to the officer on duty.

# **The following are the posted Beach & Pool Rules for all Westchester County Park Facilities**

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## **Beach Safety Rules**

**Lifeguards enforce the rules and save lives.**

**Parents and guardians supervise their children.**

- Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult, and be actively supervised at all times and in all areas of the facility.
- Obey lifeguards and Parks Department staff.
- Swimming permitted between green flags only.
- Only U.S. Coast Guard-approved vests are allowed as swim aids.
- Proper bathing suits with lining are required to swim. (No shorts, cutoffs, boxers etc.) **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

### **Prohibited**

- Running, horseplay, rowdy or unruly behavior
- Swimming unless lifeguards are on duty
- Personal coolers larger than 12 inches in diameter or height
- Styrofoam coolers
- Alcoholic beverages and glass containers
- All pets (service animals allowed)
- Loud radios or Speakers.
- Tubes, floats, masks, fins or other aquatic accessories
- Toys and ball playing of any kind
- Cell phone use in locker or rest rooms
- All diapers (except waterproof swim diapers)

### **You Will Be Refused Admission If**

- You are suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- You have excessive sunburn, open blisters, cuts or bandages.
- You show evidence of a skin disease, sore or inflamed eyes, colds or ear discharge, infectious conditions or communicable diseases.
- You do not have evidence of daily admission. Hold on to your receipt.
- You do not have a valid Park Pass, proof of residency or evidence of daily admission. Hold on to your receipt.

**Failure to comply with any of the above will result in expulsion from this facility.**

**The pool, beach and surrounding areas will be cleared for the following:**      Thunder: 30 mins.      Lightning: 45 mins.

## **Pool Safety Rules**

**Lifeguards enforce the rules and save lives.**

**Parents and guardians supervise their children.**

- Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult, and be actively supervised at all times and in all areas of the facility.
- Obey the directions of the lifeguards and Parks Department staff.
- Observe pool-depth markers and no-diving signs.
- Stay behind and clear of yellow safety lanes.
- Proper bathing suits with lining are required to swim. (No shorts, cutoffs, boxers etc.) **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- Only U.S. Coast Guard-approved floatation devices are permitted as a swim aid.
- Only a clean T-shirt may be used as a cover-up in pool.

### **Prohibited**

- Diving
- Running, dunking, horseplay, rowdy or unruly behavior
- Swimming unless lifeguards are on duty
- Personal coolers larger than 12 inches in diameter or height
- Styrofoam coolers
- Alcoholic beverages and glass containers
- All pets (service dogs allowed)
- Loud radios or Speakers
- Tubes, floats, masks, fins or other aquatic accessories
- Toys and ball playing of any kind
- All diapers (except waterproof swim diapers)
- Pollution of swimming pool by urination, discharge of fecal matter, expectorating or blowing of the nose
- Cell phone use in locker, changing or restrooms
- Picnic food in concession area

## **You Will Be Refused Admission If**

- You are suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- You have excessive sunburn, open blisters, cuts or bandages.
- You show evidence of a skin disease, sore or inflamed eyes, colds or ear discharge, infectious conditions or communicable diseases.
- You do not have a valid Park Pass, proof of residency or evidence of daily admission. Hold on to your receipt.

**Failure to comply with any of the above will result in expulsion from this facility.**

**Swim areas and surrounding spaces will be cleared as follows:**

Thunder: 30 minutes. Lightning: 45 minutes.

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## **WHISTLES**

### **One Whistle**

- Attempts to gain patrons attention to alert them if they are doing something wrong

### **Two Whistles**

- Alert the other guards and staff to a problem
- One Guard - two whistles with one finger up in the air
- Captain - two whistles with a salute
- Lieutenant - two whistles with a X
- Lightening - two whistles with lightening sign made by sticking arms diagonal from one another
- Thunder - two whistles with hands in fists double tapping
- First Aid - two whistles with arms stuck out to the side making a cross
- Missing Child - two whistles with hands on eyebrows making a visor
- Feces or Vomit - (Pool Only) two whistles right arm throws forward then circles backwards making a full circle then throws back

### **Three Whistles**

- Three whistles with multiple whistles following indicate a save is being made

### **Four Whistles**

- Most severe call. Indicates highest form of emergency
- Backboard- four whistles with one arm straight up in the air and the other arm behind the head
- Stretcher- four whistles with both arms straight up in the air
- AED- four whistles with hands placed where AED patches go (UPPER RIGHT, LOWER LEFT)
- First Aid in A Hurry- four whistles with arms going to making a “T” and back in
- Missing Child 4 whistles both hands at forehead like you are blocking the sun turn side to side

### **Police**

- Left arm is placed on your right side of your chest to symbolize a badge. Right arm makes a shield (bent at elbow)

### **Missing Save**

- Done when a guard is missing a save in front of them
- One short one long whistle, left arm pointing toward drowning victim, right arm moving back and forth over head

### **Missing Parent**

Hand knocks forehead with a fist+

**\*\*\* Signals for “IN A HURRY” is when arms move at a faster pace in position\*\*\***

# Chain of Command

Commissioner

Kathleen O'Connor



First Deputy Commissioner

Peter Tartaglia



Deputy Commissioner

Neil Squillante



Assistant Director of Division

William Bland



Assistant  
Parks Director

Ron Anderson



Parks Director

Joe Simoncini



Lifeguard  
Supervisor

Tim Wilson



Superintendents

Croton Point – Sara Cavanaugh

Glen Island – Roberto Alcantara

Saxon Woods – Ryan Mathews

Sprain Ridge – Luigi Mazzella

Tibbetts Brook – Tim Wilson/Sheldon Lindsay

Willson's Waves – Jené Davis



Lifeguard Officers



Lifeguards



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