

## Purpose

The primary purpose of the American Red Cross Lifeguarding course is to provide entry-level lifeguard participants with the knowledge and skills to prevent, recognize and respond to aquatic emergencies and to provide professional-level care for breathing and cardiac emergencies, injuries and sudden illnesses until emergency medical services (EMS) personnel take over. This program offers a choice of Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED courses to meet the various training needs of a diverse audience.

## Prerequisites

Candidates must:

1. Be at least 15 years old on or before the final scheduled session of the course.
2. Swim 300 yards, continuously demonstrating breath control and rhythmic breathing.  
Candidates may swim using the front crawl, breaststroke or a combination of both, but swimming on the back or side is not allowed. Swim goggles may be used.
3. Tread water for 2 minutes, using only the legs. Candidates should place their hands under the armpits.
4. Complete a timed event within 1 minute, 40 seconds:
  - Starting in the water, swim 20 yards. Swim goggles are not allowed.
  - Surface dive, feet-first or headfirst, to a depth of 7 to 10 feet to retrieve a 10-pound object.
  - Return to the surface and swim 20 yards on the back to return to the starting point with both hands holding the object and keeping the face at or near the surface so they are able to get a breath.
  - Exit the water without using a ladder or steps.

## Learning Objectives

Candidates must:

- Meet the age requirement.
- Demonstrate proficiency in all of the prerequisite skills.
- Describe the characteristics and responsibilities of a professional lifeguard.
- Explain how to fulfill the responsibilities of a professional lifeguard
- Define certain legal considerations and apply them to situations that might be encountered in lifeguarding.
- Describe ongoing training for lifeguards.
- Describe what it means to work as part of a lifeguard and safety team.
- Describe the role lifeguards play in ensuring facility safety.
- Identify how to ensure the safety of patrons when weather conditions create safety concerns.
- Describe the role that facility management plays in facility safety.
- Describe the drowning process.
- Identify the behaviors of a swimmer, distressed swimmer, and an active and a passive victim.
- Identify and define elements of effective surveillance.
- Explain proper scanning techniques and identify tactics to overcome scanning challenges.

- Identify various types of zones of surveillance.
- Explain how communication with patrons plays a role in preventing
- Explain patron surveillance techniques for various activities.
- Identify how to recognize and care for a victim of poisoning, heat-related illnesses and cold-related emergencies.
- Demonstrate the ability to work as a team to implement an EAP, perform a secondary assessment and provide first aid care.
- Identify possible causes of head, neck or spinal injuries on land.
- Identify signs and symptoms of head, neck or spinal injuries.
- Demonstrate how to care for victims with head, neck or spinal injuries on land.
- Demonstrate how to perform front and rear head-hold escapes.
- Demonstrate how to give in-water ventilations.
- Demonstrate how to perform a quick extrication of a victim from the water.
- Demonstrate how to care for victims with head, neck and spinal injuries in shallow and deep water.
- Demonstrate how to care for a victim with a head, neck or spinal injury in shallow water.
- Demonstrate how to rescue an active victim in deep water.
- Demonstrate how to rescue a submerged passive victim in deep water and provide care.

## Length

Varies dependent upon number of students / instructors. Generally 30 - 40 hours.

## Instructor

Currently certified Lifeguarding instructors or instructor trainers

## Certification Requirements

Candidates must:

- Attend the entire course and participate in all class sessions.
- Actively participate in all course activities, including assuming various roles during scenarios.
- Demonstrate competency in all required skills.
- Pass the final skills scenarios.
- Successfully pass final written exams with a minimum grade of 80%. If a participant fails to reach the minimum 80% on the final written exam, a retest is allowed using the other version of the exam, provided that the participant has passed the practical assessment.

## Certificate Issued and Validity Period

The American Red Cross certificate for Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED is valid for 2 years.

## Participant Materials

*American Red Cross Lifeguarding Manual*