

## Pool Alone Policy

### When to use

Use this procedure to take care of unsupervised children in our facility.

### Policy

All Wellington City Council Pools have adopted the national Pool Alone Policy.

#### Children under 5

We recommend children under 5 are accompanied by a caregiver who is within **arm's reach and in the water** with them.

Ratio: One Caregiver can supervise a maximum of two children under 5

#### Children under 8

All children under 8 must be **actively supervised** by a caregiver 16 or over

#### **Active supervision means:**

- Watching your child at all times and able to provide immediate help
- At a close distance where you and your child can see and hear each other

Ratio: One Caregiver can supervise a maximum of four children aged 5-8

A poster outlining the policy above should be displayed at the facility entrance at all times.

Reception staff must monitor to prevent unsupervised children entering and leaving the facility.

In instances where there is a suspicion of child abuse refer to your manager in line with the [Child Protection Standard](#) for guidelines and standards to follow.

### Responsibility

- All Facility staff

### Steps

In the event that a child under the age of 8 is found to be unaccompanied in our facility take the following steps:

1. Remove the child from the pool and establish:

If their caregiver ...	then ...
Is in the facility	Locate the caregiver and explain our child safety policy. Provide the caregiver with a child safety flyer.
Is not in the facility	See step 2.

2. Obtain contact details for the caregiver.

If caregiver ...	then ...
Contact details provided	See step 3.
Contact details not provided	Contact the Police and request intervention. Provide the Police with details of the facility's child safety policy and the procedures taken to contact the caregivers. See step 6.

3. Place the child in a safe, dry and supervised area. Do not remove the child from the facility.

If contact ...	then ...
Is made	Obtain the caregiver's details and require them to collect their child as soon as possible, reiterate their responsibilities and our child safety policy.  See step 4.
Cannot be made	Contact the Police and request intervention. Provide the Police with details of the facility's child safety policy and the procedures taken to contact the caregivers. See step 6.

4. Wait for 30 minutes for caregiver to arrive:

If ...	then ...
Collection is within 30 minutes	See step 5.
Collection time is longer than 30 minutes	Contact the Police and request intervention. Provide the Police with details of the facility's child safety policy and the procedures taken to contact the caregiver. See step 6.

5. Ensure identification is sighted before releasing the child to a caregiver. Do not allow unauthorised people to remove the child from the facility. Ensure the caregiver is provided with a flyer detailing our child safety policy to take away with them.

6. An Incident report must be completed as per the **Incident Reporting and Investigation Standard**.

# Standards for Pool Supervision

## Policy

The Duty Manager is responsible for ensuring that lifeguards comply with Pool Safe Supervision Standard and that lifeguards are located in high risk areas.

Each body of water open to the public or after-hours groups must be supervised by a lifeguard who holds a current Pool Lifeguard Practising Certificate (PLPC) and has completed an induction as a minimum. Staff without this qualification and/or who have not completed an induction must be accompanied by a qualified lifeguard and are not to be included in the supervision ratios. All lifeguards must be able to retrieve an object from the deepest part of the pool. Staff training is to be completed at least quarterly, if staff do not attend, it is recommended they attend another facility or reschedule with Operations Manager. If staff regularly do not attend training, they will be taken off the roster until a plan is established.

- Summer/seasonal lifeguards must attend training before they commence work
- Casual/part-time lifeguards must attend quarterly

Lifeguards must continuously scan the water. They must regularly move around the area they are responsible for:

- ensuring extensive coverage
- maintaining eye contact and
- communicating with other lifeguards and the public

Lifeguards must not leave the area they are responsible for unless another lifeguard can take over. If a lifeguard needs to leave pool side for any reason, they must advise the Staff in Charge, so that cover can be arranged.

If at any time, a lifeguard feels uncomfortable with the numbers of swimmers they are supervising they must speak to the Duty Manager who will make a decision and allocate additional staff as required.

All lifeguards are required to have a bumbag and whistle on them at all times. Bumbags are to remain fully stocked and checked each shift to ensure that the correct first aid equipment is in them. It is each Lifeguards responsibility to ensure that their bumbag is fully stocked. Bumbags are to contain:

- Gloves
- CPR face shield
- Band-Aids
- Saline solution
- Antiseptic wipes
- Combine pad
- Notebook
- Pen

## Responsibility

- All Facility Operations staff
- All Facility Management staff

## Guidelines

### Supervision of different groups of customers

We have many different customer groups to cater for and some may require more attention than others as our environment may be unfamiliar to them. They may not have good water skills or need additional supervision. They include but are not limited to:

- Young children/infants
- Intellectually disabled people
- New migrants/refugees
- Elderly
- Swimmers using pool for rehabilitation (e.g. heart bypass surgery patients)

Youth may need closer supervision and not necessarily due to poor swimming ability. Being at an age where impressing the opposite sex and being cool in front of your mates is important, behavioural issues may arise from time to time.

In instances where a sports group, squad or Learn to Swim (LTS) session is in progress, lifeguards are still responsible to provide emergency response and customer care. Lifeguards need to be proactive and liaise with coaches, swimmers, LTS instructors and participants when needed as they can assist with rescues and treatment if required.

### Pool obstacles and sun glare

Pool obstacles can come in any shape, size or form and are not always in the water. Pool obstacles can be a hazard that may obstruct a lifeguard's line of sight. Where possible, isolate, minimise or eliminate obstacles. Watch out for sun glare as it may obstruct your view and cause minor damage to your eyes.

### Structural obstacles

If a lifeguarding position has an obstructed view from pool users, then if possible, move to a more suitable position or notify the Duty Manager.

### Water based obstacles

Lifeguards have more control over water-based obstacles. When minimising or eliminating water-based obstacles the lifeguard must provide the customer with an explanation that what they are doing or what they have brought to the pool is prohibiting the lifeguard's ability to view the pool.

Fixed physical obstacles are different for each facility and are outlined in each pool's supervision guidelines.

## Rotation

Consistent rotation by the lifeguard is required in order to effectively supervise all areas of the pool. Rotations to different lifeguarding stations will be governed by a set pattern or by the DM/FIC at the start of shift on a written daily roster.

When rotating on shift, lifeguards must ensure that the pool continues to be watched at all times. It is a fact that more accidents occur during rotation due to lack of supervision.

## Staff breaks

Lifeguards must have the permission of the Duty Manager before going on a break. The position is to be filled and handover must include updating the lifeguard with any issues encountered.

## Lifeguard Communication

There are a variety of ways in which lifeguards communicate with each other including voice, hand signals, whistle blows, UHF radios, duress alarms and using public address (PA) systems. Communication by voice or hand signals might be to pass on information to other team members, request assistance in a non-emergency situation or to remind team members of breaks or duties that are to be carried out.

Lifeguards are required at all times to carry a whistle on them. In an emergency, lifeguard will use a series of whistle blows:

- 1 whistle blow for patrons' attention
- 2 whistle blows for staff assistance
- 3 whistle blows for staff assistance in an emergency

Depending on the situation lifeguards can also shout to other staff for assistance or use a loud hailer, duress alarm or handheld radio. Refer to [Allocation of UHF Radios](#) procedure below.