

Aquatics Emergency Action Plan

Emergency—A serious accident or injury has occurred or there is an immediate threat of injury or death to one or more persons.

Emergency Response Coordinator—The aquatics director is the emergency response coordinator. He has direct communication (two-way radio, wireless phone, or runner) with the emergency response team (camp director, health officer, ranger, etc.). If the aquatics director leaves the waterfront, he will designate an acting director and ensure all waterfront personnel are aware who the acting director is.

Safety Boat — A boat designated for use in transporting equipment and personnel to the scene of an accident or injury. The boat may be pre-loaded or equipped with a first aid kit, breathing barrier, backboard, or AED. The boat may be either human-powered (paddle or oars) or motor-driven (electric or gasoline), depending on the anticipated distance.

Inside the Swimming Area

1. Active drowning, distressed, or submerged victim:
 - a. Notify—The guard who sees the victim activates the emergency action plan using the predetermined signal (e.g., “Rescue!”)¹. Other guards echo the activation and point to the guard making the rescue. This is to ensure the emergency response coordinator is aware of the situation and knows who is involved.
 - b. Perform rescue:
 - i) Perform the appropriate rescue.
 - ii) Other guards adjust to provide backup coverage.
 - iii) Designated guard brings first aid kit (with CPR breathing barrier) and AED (if available).
 - iv) Emergency response coordinator contacts the camp medical officer and camp director (e.g., “Distressed swimmer. Rescue in progress.”).
 - c. Post-rescue:
 - i) Call for a buddy check and clear the swim area if directed by the emergency response coordinator.
 - ii) Provide first aid as necessary.
 - iii) Replace rescue equipment.
 - iv) Conduct an incident debrief.
 - v) Provide post-incident counseling.
 2. Missing swimmer:
 - a. Notify:
 - i) Activate the emergency action plan (e.g., “LBD”).
 - ii) The emergency response coordinator contacts the camp director and camp medical officer with the missing person’s name and last known location and assigned campsite.
 - iii) Clear the swim area.
-

- b. Search:
 - i) The camp director directs camp staff to look for the missing swimmer in other parts of camp (campsite, dining hall, etc.).
 - ii) Two guards begin an immediate search of the last known location of the missing swimmer.
 - iii) The designated guard brings masks and fins to the search area.
 - iv) Additional guards perform an underwater line search of the entire swim area beginning with the last known location of the missing swimmer.
- c. Post-rescue:
 - i) Provide rescue breathing or CPR as required.
 - ii) Provide "near drowning" care.
 - iii) Replace rescue equipment.
 - iv) Provide post-incident counseling for witnesses and staff.

Outside the swimming area (boating area or open-water swim area):

The condition of the victim or the type of injury will determine the level of response.

Injury, responsive victim — A responsive victim is able to follow instructions from the responding guard. He is able to grasp a reach pole, flotation device, or actively assist with transfer into a rescue boat. Time is not critical, and assistance is available from other guards or instructors.

Injury, incapacitated victim — The victim is not able to respond to instructions from the guard. He may be able to respond to questions from the guard to assist in determining the degree of the incapacitation. The guard needs assistance in transporting the person to the boat dock or removing the person from the water.

Life threatening injury — Time is critical. The person needs or potentially will need advanced life support.

1. Notify — When an accident or incident occurs while on the water and away from the boating launch area, use the following signals to activate the emergency action plan:
 - Attention, assistance required — One 3-second blast from a whistle or horn; paddle, oar, rescue tube, or arm raised vertically overhead; call out, "Injured boater!"
 - Urgent, life threatening situation — Three 3-second blasts from a whistle or horn; paddle, oar, rescue tube, or arm(s) waved overhead; radio call: "MAYDAY." Contact the camp medical staff, direct them to call 911 and request emergency medical services (EMS) immediately. Respond to the scene with the first aid kit and other emergency equipment.
 - All clear — Two 3-second blasts from a whistle or horn; paddle, oar, rescue tube held horizontally overhead; arms extended parallel to ground; finger and thumb forming "OK signal" or "thumbs up" signal (no assistance required, situation resolved).
2. Respond—Provide assistance to the victim:
 - a. Responsive victim — provide first aid or spinal injury management. Return to the boat launch or dock.
 - b. Incapacitated victim — provide first aid or spinal injury management. With the assistance of another guard, remove the victim from the water. Return to the boat launch or dock.
 - c. Life threatening injury — If CPR is required or may be required:
 - Open-water swimming (Mile Swim) — Move the victim to the nearest shore or dock where it is practicable to perform CPR. One guard rows while the other holds the victim at the transom of the guard boat (rowboat). Other guards will use the safety boat to bring the AED and first aid equipment to the scene.

- Canoeing — Administer CPR or paddle the victim to the nearest shore or dock where it is practicable to perform CPR. If the victim is in the water and too large to quickly bring into the canoe, one person can hold onto the victim while the other person paddles. Other guards use the safety boat to bring the AED, spinal injury board, and first aid equipment to the scene.
- Rowing — If able, administer CPR onboard. Otherwise, row to the nearest shore or dock where it is practicable to perform CPR. If the victim is in the water and too large to quickly bring into the rowboat, one person can hold onto the victim at the transom while the other person rows. Other guards use the safety boat to bring the AED, spinal injury board, and first aid equipment to the scene.
- Sailing — If able, administer CPR onboard. Otherwise sail or paddle the sailboat to the nearest shore or dock where it is practicable to perform CPR. If the victim is in the water and too large to quickly bring into the sailboat, one person can hold onto the victim while the other person paddles or sails the boat. Alternatively, attach a line to the victim and tow him or her to the nearest shore or dock where it is practicable to perform CPR. Other guards use the safety boat to bring the AED, spinal injury board, and first aid equipment to the scene.
- Motor boating — If able, administer CPR onboard. Otherwise, go to the nearest shore or boat dock where it is practicable to perform CPR. If the victim is in the water and too large to quickly bring into the boat, one person can hold onto the victim while the other person steers the boat to the nearest shore or dock. If the victim is in the water, moving the boat in reverse will prevent injury by the propeller. Other guards use the safety boat to bring the AED, spinal injury board, and first aid equipment to the scene.
- Kayaking (flat-water instruction)
 - a. Sit-inside kayak — Use a line to tow the victim to the nearest shore or dock where it is practicable to perform CPR. Other guards will use the safety boat to bring the AED and first aid equipment to the scene.
 - b. Sit-on-top kayak — Place the victim on the kayak, and paddle to the nearest shore or dock where it is practicable to perform CPR. Other guards will use the safety boat to bring the AED and first aid equipment to the scene.

Severe Weather (lightning, high wind, hail, tornado)

1. Notify:
 - a. Activate the emergency action plan (signal: attention or urgent).
 - b. Contact the camp director. (“Severe weather approaching. Securing the waterfront.”)
2. Recall — Signal (using bell) all watercraft to return to the shore. Remove all swimmers from the swim area. Move all Scouts, leaders, and guests to the designated shelter area.
3. Secure — Bring watercraft ashore, secure sails, secure all loose equipment as time permits.
4. Shelter — Move to the designated severe weather shelter.
5. Post-incident actions — Document actions taken, perform safety checks, brief supervisors (aquatics director, camp director, medical officer, camp ranger).

Accident or injury

1. Notify:
 - a. Activate the emergency action plan (signal: assistance required or life threatening situation).

- b. Contact the camp medical officer if the injury is severe or life threatening.
2. Survey the scene — Look to determine it is safe to approach the victim.
3. Care — Provide first aid and treat for shock until medical assistance arrives.
4. Post-incident actions — Document actions in the First Aid Log, replenish first aid supplies, replace emergency equipment, eliminate or minimize any contributing hazards, brief supervisors (aquatics director, camp director, medical officer, camp ranger).

Fire

1. Notify:
 - a. Activate the emergency action plan (signal: urgent).
 - b. Contact the camp director
2. Evacuate — Move all Scouts, leaders, and guests away from the fire.
3. Escort — Send a staff member to the main service road to meet firefighting personnel.
4. Extinguish — Attempt to extinguish the fire after everyone is away from the fire.
5. Post incident actions — Document actions taken, perform safety checks, brief supervisors (aquatics director, camp director, medical officer, camp ranger).

Fighting

1. Notify:
 - a. Activate the emergency action plan (signal: attention or urgent).
 - b. Contact the camp director.
2. Isolate — Restrain or separate the persons involved in the fight.
3. Care — Provide first aid as required.
4. Post-incident actions — Get identification and a statement from each witness to the incident. Brief supervisors (aquatics director, camp director, medical officer, camp ranger).

Disruptive Behavior

1. Notify:
 - a. Activate the emergency action plan (signal: assistance required).
 - b. Obtain assistance consistent with the severity of the situation (other staff member, aquatics director, adult leader).
2. Isolate — Move the person away from the program area to discuss the situation. Alternatively, move participants away from the person.
3. De-escalate — Ask the person to leave the area.
4. Post-incident actions — Document actions taken and brief supervisors (aquatics director, program director, camp director).

Intruder (An unauthorized person uses threatening behavior or causes a disturbance.)

1. Notify:
 - a. Activate the emergency action plan (signal: assistance required).
 - b. Contact the camp director immediately.
2. Isolate — Move all participants and staff away from the intruder. This may involve keeping all watercraft on the lake as opposed to recalling them to the shore or keeping all swimmers in the water or on the dock as opposed to clearing the swim area.
3. De-escalate — Ask the intruder(s) to leave the area. Inform the intruder that the camp is private property. Do not provoke or argue with the intruder(s).
4. Post-incident actions — Document actions taken, seek counseling for participants and staff as needed, brief supervisors (aquatics director, camp director, medical officer, camp ranger) and law enforcement authorities, if required (e.g., police, sheriff).

Weapon Threat (There is a person carrying a weapon and threatening to cause harm.)

1. Notify:
 - a. Activate the emergency action plan (signal: urgent)
 - b. Contact the camp director immediately.
2. Isolate — Move all participants and staff away from the threat. This may involve keeping all watercraft on the lake instead of recalling them to the shore or keeping all swimmers in the water or on the dock instead of clearing the swim area.
3. De-escalate — Do not approach the person with the weapon. However, if the person approaches you, move away and do not attempt to disarm him or her. Ask them to lay down the weapon. Do not provoke or argue with the person.
4. Post-incident actions — Document actions taken, seek counseling for participants and staff as needed, brief supervisors (aquatics director, camp director, medical officer, camp ranger) and law enforcement authorities (e.g., police, sheriff).