

# Currents

Newfoundland and Labrador – September 2025



LIFESAVING SOCIETY®  
The Lifeguarding Experts

## Volunteering with the Lifesaving Society

### What is the role of volunteers in the Lifesaving Society?

The Lifesaving Society is a registered charity, and as such there is a legal requirement to have a volunteer board of directors.

The Board of Directors governs the organization and sets direction for all work and activity within the Lifesaving Society.

Committees are composed of dedicated volunteers, all interested in the same area or topic. Committees are assigned by the Board of Directors and report their work to the Board of Directors.

Community events help to spread information on drowning prevention and water safety. Setting up an event or participating in one helps to get information out and is vital in the drowning prevention mission.

Sport competitions are a great place to volunteer. Officials, timers, runners, equipment crew and a host of other people are required to ensure competitions run smoothly.

### Why do people volunteer?

Wide range of reasons, every person has their own reasons for volunteering with the Lifesaving Society.

- Passionate about drowning prevention
- Interesting activities
- I was an athlete and now I am moving to the officials side of competitions
- Starts off as an obligation from school or work
- Friends are doing it, and I tagged along

### How are volunteers recognized in the Lifesaving Society?

**Commonwealth Honour Awards** recognize leadership and dedicated service to the Lifesaving Society.

- The **Service Commendation** honours volunteers for significant contributions to the aims of the Society with a minimum of two years of service.
- The **Service Medal** acknowledges a minimum of five years of noteworthy service as a volunteer officer or committee member.
- The **Service Cross** honours meritorious service to the Society over at least 15 years.
- **Honorary Life Member** recognizes at least 20 years of service involving activity at a provincial as well as a national or international level.
- Volunteers with a minimum 25 years of meritorious and noteworthy service at a provincial as well as a national or international level may be recognized as an **Honorary Life Governor**.
- **Commonwealth Vice President**, the highest award of the Society, is normally reserved for individuals who have served on a National Council or the Commonwealth Council. Others may qualify in exceptional circumstances.

### How do you become a volunteer?

Contact the Lifesaving Society at [info@lifesavingnl.ca](mailto:info@lifesavingnl.ca) letting them know you are looking into volunteering and what area you are interested in. A team member will get back to you to discuss opportunities with you.

## SURF THE WEB!

The Lifesaving Society Newfoundland and Labrador is on social media! Find us online for updates, reminders, save the dates, closure notices, and aquatics content!

Follow our social accounts here:



## Determining lifeguard supervision zones

The strategic placement of lifeguards within aquatic facilities requires thorough planning. Multiple factors must be evaluated to ensure optimal coverage and safety; however, it is essential that lifeguards in pool environments maintain clear visibility of the entire pool – including the surface, mid-water, and bottom – to provide effective supervision and protection.

### Step 1 – Who and what are you guarding?

Evaluate the following elements: facility configuration, depth, equipment and amenities, overall size, entry points to both the facility and the water, potential blind spots, bottom visibility, lighting in high-risk areas, glare, surface disruptions, shadows, and the impact of different times of day and seasonal changes.

#### Assess programming and participation

Guarding protocols should be tailored to specific programs and positions. Identify and document programming options, participation levels, and the distinct supervision requirements for each.

Key factors to consider include the number and location of bathers and spectators, activity type, staffing (lifeguards and assistant lifeguards), additional support roles, relevant regulations, utilized spaces, and necessary equipment.

When reviewing physical space, programming, and participation, consider the following questions:

- What must be visible during aquatic activities, across various programs and at differing participation levels?
- What can currently be seen? If visibility is obstructed or incomplete – whether at the surface, through the water, at the bottom, or out of the water – implement appropriate corrective measures.
- Additionally, identify areas within those same zones where visibility is lacking.

Systematically compare this information with your facility's characteristics, programming, and participation data.

### Step 2 – Determine supervision zones – guard positions, zone identification

Review facility, programming, and participation details to establish supervision zones and assign lifeguard positions and responsibilities.

Prioritize placement by:

- Recognition: Lifeguards must have clear sightlines.
- Prevention: Position lifeguards to prevent incidents.
- Response: Ensure lifeguards can respond quickly.

Determine coverage type, lifeguard locations, elevation (elevated or ground level), whether patrolling or stationary, and define each lifeguard's area and duties.

To evaluate supervision zones, follow these steps:

- Check visibility.
- Have others verify.
- Test recognition and response times.
- Adjust placements as needed.

### Step 3 – Mapping of supervision zones

Mapping sets the standard for lifeguard supervision by outlining zones for activities, crowd sizes, and times or seasons. Zone maps should be accessible to all staff and should include:

- Facility and program name.
- Visual lifeguard zone layout (site plans, photos, or drawings).
- Brief zone details, including hazards, boundaries, equipment.
- Required lifeguard positions (elevated, roving, in-water, etc.).
- Specific responsibilities for each zone or position.

### Step 4 – Education of lifeguards and aquatic team

Document supervision zones and the rationale for lifeguard placement. Train lifeguards on zone coverage, expectations, and procedures for addressing issues. Monitor aquatic staff to ensure adherence to supervision zones and to provide support as needed.

### Step 5 – Regular evaluation

Organizational changes – such as modified programming, updated equipment, or evolving staffing requirements – can affect supervision needs. When such changes occur, it is essential to review and adjust supervision zones accordingly.

All supervision zones should be systematically evaluated at least once per year.

## SUPPORT DROWNING PREVENTION IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

The Lifesaving Society Newfoundland and Labrador is a registered charity that relies on the generous donations of time and money from its volunteers and donors. Those who donate \$25 or more receive a tax receipt and have their names published in the Society's Annual Report.

Support drowning prevention in Newfoundland and Labrador by [donating today](#).



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LifeguardDepot.com is the online store of the Lifesaving Society. All proceeds from LifeguardDepot.com support drowning prevention and the development of young leaders through Lifesaving Sport.

## All about training programs

The Lifesaving Society divides the training programs offered into the following categories:

**Self-Rescue** – supports the development of skills that assist people in keeping themselves safe in and around the water.

- Swim to Survive
- Swim for Life

**Lifesaving** – introduces and develops the knowledge, skills, fitness and judgment to act as a lifesaver when faced with incidents.

- Canadian Swim Patrol
- Bronze Star
- Bronze Medallion
- First Aid

**Lifeguarding** – develops the knowledge, skills, fitness and judgment to perform as an assistant lifeguard and lifeguard, preventing and responding to incidents.

- Bronze Cross
- National Lifeguard – Pool, Waterpark, Waterfront or Surf

**Leadership** – those who teach, coach, examine and train within the Lifesaving Society.

- Instructors
- Coaches
- Examiners
- Trainers

**Lifesaving Sport** - is the only sport whose skills are first learned for humanitarian purposes. Through lifesaving sport, the Lifesaving Society seeks to engage and inspire youth in our drowning prevention mission.

- Fundamentals Program

Are you participating in all these areas – as a candidate, as a leader, as a programmer? Do you know about all these programs?

To learn more information about the Lifesaving Society Training Programs, dig into the [Program Guide](#).

Looking to add a new certification to your portfolio? Visit [Find a Course](#).



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