



KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

RANDY SIMONS
Commissioner *Pro Tempore*

Dear 2025 Lifeguard Candidate:

Our lifeguards are a vital asset to the NYS Parks system. They protect more than 25 million swimmers and perform thousands of rescues annually. I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the returning lifeguards for the excellent work performed in the past, as well as welcome and encourage new candidates who are striving to join our team.

All seasonal lifeguard candidates must qualify annually. Again in 2025, the lifeguard qualifying process will only be administered by the Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP). The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will not be conducting lifeguard qualifiers. Lifeguard candidates for the DEC must qualify through an OPRHP sponsored event. Please be aware that these results are not applicable in Long Island. OPRHP conducts a separate surf lifeguard program for our Long Island facilities. Likewise, the Long Island process does not qualify candidates for employment in our other Regions. Candidates seeking employment as a lifeguard for OPRHP (other than Long Island) must meet the standards outlined in this 2025 OPRHP Lifeguard Information packet.

Qualifying dates have closed out in the past and candidates are strongly encouraged to pre-register. Candidates should contact the OPRHP regional offices (list attached) at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date. If you decide NOT to attend we ask that you notify the host region as soon as possible to allow another person the opportunity to take your place. We reserve the right to cancel qualifying events and will attempt to notify candidates in a timely manner.

Reminders:

- All candidates are required to show identification prior to participating in the qualifying process. Acceptable forms of identification include but are not limited to: State issued driver license, non-driver ID, or Passport. A photo ID without a date of birth may be used provided a birth certificate is also presented.
- The qualifying process consists of two sections. Candidates must pass both sections to qualify.
- **BRING YOUR POCKET MASK.** The use of a pocket mask is required for the CPR section. A one-way valve should be used on the mask. We do not supply masks.
- Each cycle of compressions for CPR must be completed within 14-19 secs.
- Candidates will be provided a second opportunity to complete the CPR section at each location. This second opportunity will be offered after the conclusion of the entire qualifying process (Water and CPR).
- We WILL NOT offer a second Water Test on the same day at scheduled sites. However, a candidate will be permitted to reattempt one event as part of a subsequent heat. Once an event concludes and the next begins we will not return to a prior event. Each candidate may take advantage of this option only once at each OPRHP scheduled qualifier.
- **I urge you to review the "2025 Lifeguard Information" and "2025 Lifeguard Qualifications".** The American Red Cross (ARC) Lifeguard Course is valid for 2 years. We require certification to the Waterfront level (base course and a module) in all Regions with the exception of New York City, as the majority of our facilities are beaches. Also, **CPR certification is only recognized for a period of 1 year for lifeguards regardless of the expiration date indicated on your card (As per NYS Department of Health).** Please be sure you get the appropriate certification (CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer or equivalent). Candidates hired at facilities with waterslides must be certified to the Water Park level or successfully complete an in-house training program. Please contact your regional representative or the Water Safety Office if you have any questions.
- Please note: All lifeguard candidates must meet the Agency medical standards. This includes the minimum vision requirements.

Sincerely,

Richard Alden, Director of Water Safety

Richard.Alden@parks.ny.gov



NYS Parks Lifeguard Employment – Quick Reference

<https://parks.ny.gov/employment/lifeguards/default.aspx>

Thank you for your interest in lifeguard employment opportunities with NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation!

To be eligible for employment as a lifeguard with the Agency, *all* candidates must (annually) take and pass a state administered qualifying procedure.

Q: What is a qualifying procedure and how much does it cost?

A: The qualifier consists of two parts; a CPR component and a water skills evaluation. A description of the qualifying procedure is available on the Web Page under the Qualifying Information Tab. Both sections must be passed to be eligible for employment. Should a candidate not pass the water skills and/or CPR section(s) at a single location they will need to register/attend a separate qualifier. Candidates will only be required to retake the section(s) in which they were unsuccessful. Candidates are permitted multiple attempts to qualify. There is no charge to take the qualifier.

Q: I am not currently certified as a lifeguard but will be completing a lifeguard certification course before the summer. Am I able to start the application/qualification process prior to having the certifications?

A: Yes. You do not need current lifeguard certification to participate in the qualifying procedure or to submit your application.

Q: I have current lifeguard certification; do I still need to take the qualifier?

A: Yes. The qualifying procedure is a pre-requisite for NYS Parks lifeguard employment. The qualifying procedure and lifeguard certification are two different things; both are required for lifeguard employment eligibility.

Q: Where are the qualifiers held and how do I register?

A: Qualifying procedures are offered statewide. For a current listing of locations and dates, please visit our website and click on the Qualifying Dates Tab (<https://parks.ny.gov/employment/lifeguards/default.aspx>). Lifeguard Qualifying dates are currently being reserved and the tab will continue to be updated as they are added throughout the Spring. Candidates may register by calling or emailing the Regional Contact listed on the Qualification Information Tab. Candidates will need to be prepared to be in the water and will also need to bring a CPR resuscitation mask.

Q: I have successfully completed the NYS Parks qualifying procedure and have completed the employment application (<https://parks.ny.gov/employment/documents/FillableUpdatedParksEmployeeApplicationS1000Part1.pdf>), what's next?

A: Your application should be submitted to the Park at which you are interested in seeking employment. Park management will schedule and conduct interviews with interested candidates. Once a conditional offer of employment has been extended candidates will be required to submit a Lifeguard Medical Form completed by your physician as well as current certifications.

Q: I always took the Lifeguard Qualifier through the DEC. Why can I not find any DEC dates anywhere?

A: DEC will not be conducting any qualifiers this year. With numerous OPRHP qualifiers scheduled it was decided there were sufficient opportunities for candidates to qualify.

Should you need more information or require further assistance, reach out to any of the contacts listed on the web page for assistance.



2025 LIFEGUARD QUALIFICATION INFORMATION for OPRHP sites except Long Island

- The Qualifying Process consists of two (2) sections; a practical demonstration of lifesaving skills and a practical demonstration of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) skills. Each event will be evaluated on a PASS or FAIL basis and all events in each section must be completed on the same day for that section to qualify as a pass.
- Candidates must pass both sections to be eligible for employment.
- Candidates have unlimited attempts to pass each section; however, each candidate will have only one attempt per session for the water section and two attempts per day for the CPR section at scheduled sites. A candidate will be permitted to reattempt one event of the Water Section per day as part of the qualifying procedure.
- Candidates may participate at any scheduled site and have the results forwarded to their desired region or area. Standards for employment with OPRHP are outlined for each event.
- All skills are evaluated using current standards of the American Red Cross.
- Sideline coaching and/or lap counting is not allowed. The qualifying procedure is designed to evaluate individual skills, endurance, and reasoning ability. Please listen closely and follow directions.
- Candidates may wear goggles for the 200 yard swim, 50 yard sprint and the underwater event.
- If you do not understand any part of the directions or specifics of an event, please ask for clarification.
- All jewelry must be removed or covered with tape prior to the Rear Carry with Rescue Tube event.

WATER TEST

Candidates will be permitted 5 minutes to warm up and familiarize themselves with the pool.

(Explain to candidates the starting procedure that will be used for the 200 and 50 yard timed events.)

1. 200 YARD SWIM

- Candidates will dive from the deep end pool deck and swim 200 yards in four (4) minutes or less. Extra lengths or laps will be considered a failure.
- The only strokes allowed are the front crawl or breaststroke.
- Any type of turn is acceptable.
- Continuous swimming is required. Do not stand or push off the pool bottom.

2. 20 YARD UNDERWATER SWIM - SEARCH AND RECOVERY

- Stand or tread water at *the location indicated by the examiner*. The brick will be thrown when you are in position looking at the deep-water end wall.
- Candidates must start, using any form of plunge, upon hearing a whistle blown by an examiner. Begin moving IMMEDIATELY BUT ONLY when you hear the single whistle blast.
- Candidates will swim 20 yards underwater following the bottom contour of the pool, simulating an underwater search for a victim. You must touch the deep end wall before surfacing. Breaking the surface of the water before the end-wall is touched will be considered an immediate failure.
- After touching the deep end wall, surface, take a breath and immediately swim away from the wall and perform a surface dive to recover a 10-pound brick.
- **--DO NOT PUSH OFF THE WALL - AND DO NOT HANG ONTO THE WALL.**
- Two surface dive attempts are allowed for the brick recovery.
- Pushing off the bottom after recovering the brick is acceptable.
- Upon surfacing the candidate will swim back to the shallow end-wall of the pool without walking. Candidate must swim either on their side with the brick on their hip or swim on their back with the brick on their torso *simulating a victim carry*. The brick must be secured by at least one hand at all times. Underwater swimming while carrying the brick is not permitted. If the brick is dropped once during the swim, immediately recover the brick and continue the carry. Dropping the brick a second time will be considered a failure.
- Candidates must swim to and touch the shallow end-wall before standing up. No walking. The event will conclude when the candidate places the brick on the deck at the point where the swim concluded.
- Candidates will fail for not immediately following verbal instructions from an examiner.
- Reminder: Do not take deep breaths before underwater swimming – take no more than 3 or 4 short breaths prior to swimming underwater to avoid shallow water blackout.
- Goggles may be used for this event.

3. 50 YARD SPRINT

- Candidates will dive from the pool deck and swim 50 yards in 45 seconds or less.
- The only strokes allowed are the front crawl or breaststroke.
- Any type of turn is acceptable.
- Continuous swimming is required. Do not stand or push off the pool bottom.

4. REAR CARRY WITH RESCUE TUBE -

- Candidates will start from the shallow end of the pool with their backs against the wall (or other designated starting point), holding a rescue tube and looking down the pool at the examiner. The examiner, who will be in deep water, will signal that the event is to begin and then begin struggling *as an active victim in need of rescue*. Candidates should immediately react to the struggling “victim”.
- Candidates will **swim quickly** to the examiner and make a REAR APPROACH, making contact by using the Active Victim Rear Rescue technique.
- As the candidate approaches, the Technician will turn and present their back for the carry when and if the candidate demonstrates they are in a proper ready position.
- The candidate must use only the double armpit towing technique for an active drowning victim. Using ONE arm to stroke will not be accepted.
- Once the examiner is correctly placed upon the rescue tube the candidate will tow the examiner back to the starting point until the examiner taps out.
- The examiner will end the event if forward progress ceases. The candidate may not stand or walk at any time while "towing" the examiner.
- The examiner's face must be maintained above the water at all times. **The examiner may begin struggling if their face goes underwater or if the carry is ineffective.**
- If the examiner slips off the tube, the candidate must immediately position the examiner back onto the tube and continue the tow. The candidate will fail if the examiner slips off the tube a SECOND TIME.
- Deviation from published procedures resulting in abuse or injury to the examiner will result in FAILURE.

TAP OUT

A candidate may end the attempt for any reason by “tapping out”. If tapped, the Technician will stop the rescue and provide any assistance as needed. This will be considered a failure.

In the event a Technician needs to “tap out”, the candidate will release the Technician and back away. If the Technician “taps out”, through no fault of the candidate, the candidate will be permitted to either restart or continue the event based on the discretion of the Technician. Note: This does not affect a candidate who has failed to meet the standards of the event.

CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR) TEST

Candidates will be evaluated based on the current standards of the American Red Cross CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer.

USE OF A POCKET MASK IS REQUIRED. A one-way valve should be used for the event. Candidates must bring their own personal pocket mask.

- Candidates will have at least one minute to practice on the manikin on which they will be evaluated. If there is a problem with the manikin please notify the Technician before the evaluation begins.
- Each candidate must demonstrate CPR competency by performing "professional level" one rescuer adult CPR for a suspected drowning victim.
- Once you begin, **DO NOT STOP** until instructed by the examiner.
- The candidate must:
 - 1) Establish unresponsiveness.
 - 2) Establish an adequate airway and check for breathing and pulse for 5 to 10 seconds.
 - 3) Provide proper ventilations with the mask.
 - 4) Perform the correct ratio for one rescuer CPR. Each set of 30 compressions must be done between 14 - 19 seconds with the proper hand position. Compressions must be of the correct depth.

NOTE: A candidate will be permitted to continue the CPR event into a compression cycle even when they have received a "Fail" for a previous step. This will allow the Technician to provide additional feedback to the candidate on items such as, but not necessarily limited to, the pulse check and compression cycle. Items past the initial point of failure will not be evaluated as a Pass or Fail on the candidate form.

CLEANING PROCEDURES: We ask that candidates clean the manikins after performing CPR, by wetting or spraying the manikin's mouth and face using the supplied materials and solution. Leave the manikins face wet for at least 1 minute before wiping it dry with a clean pad. Each candidate may repeat the process, if so desired, when they arrive at the manikin.

OPRHP is committed to safety. The use of your pocket mask combined with the cleaning procedures outlined above should be sufficient. A new "lung" will be provided prior to your practice time if requested.



2025 LIFEGUARD INFORMATION for all OPRHP sites except Long Island

LIFEGUARD QUALIFICATIONS for 2025

1. Minimum age: 15 for lifeguarding at our pools; 16 for our other locations outside of Long Island (preference given to individuals 18 years of age and older).
2. PRIOR to employment, you must have acceptable and current certifications in the following American Red Cross courses (or equivalent):
 - Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED – in the New York City Region
 - Lifeguarding/First Aid/CPR/AED with Waterfront Skills Module – for all regions except NYC
3. • CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer – which includes Adult and Child CPR - all regions.
 - First Aid if not included in Lifeguard Training course material – all regions.
 - Waterpark Lifeguarding certification for any lifeguard working at a park with water slides.

Consult with the Agency Water Safety Office for equivalent courses.

- Lifeguard and First Aid certificates validity periods vary by provider. Please make sure you possess appropriate and valid certifications.
- Initial certification as a Lifeguard through ARC will include CPR. No separate certificate is necessary.
- CPR certificates must be dated within the last year as per the NYS DOH.
- A lifeguard will be terminated from lifeguard employment if any required certificate lapses during the operating season (recertification is acceptable).
- Please consult with the Regional or Albany Office if you have questions on certifications.

3. Candidates must successfully complete the qualifying process and any other training programs sanctioned by the Agency. Please note: Candidates may participate in the qualifying process without possessing certification; however, candidates that do possess current certifications will likely have an advantage in the process over those who do not due to familiarity with the subject matter.
4. New candidates must undergo an interview by regional staff; the purpose of which is to evaluate an individual's maturity and the ability to communicate.
5. After receiving a "conditional offer of employment, each NEW candidate will be required to submit a current 2024 NYS Parks Medical form, containing a Physician's certification concerning the candidate and:
 - Candidates must meet the Agency vision requirement.
 - Candidates must be able to hear normal sounds in each ear, along with other medical standards.
 - Returning lifeguards, hired prior to 2013 with no break in service, will be required to submit a self-attestation form stating they are physically capable of performing lifeguard duties, with no medical changes. Returning lifeguards may be required to secure a standard medical examination if there are questions concerning their physical status. All medical forms and records will be held in confidence.
6. All lifeguard candidates are subject to a criminal background check as a condition of employment.



**New York State
Parks, Recreation and
Historic Preservation**

KATHY HOCHUL
Governor

RANDY SIMONS
Commissioner *Pro Tempore*

REGIONAL LIFEGUARD CONTACTS 2025

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New York City Region
Denny Ferrell Riverbank State Park
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Palisades Interstate Park Commission
Bear Mountain State Park
Administration Building
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Saratoga/Capital District Park Region
Saratoga Spa State Park
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Long Island Region
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