



## Lifeguard Training Safety FAQ

The Parks and Recreation Department's Aquatics Division looks forward to offering service to our community. As COVID-19 cases moderate, emphasis will shift towards expanding pool access through training and hiring lifeguards while observing and implementing comprehensive safety procedures for both staff and visitors.

Being a lifeguard means prioritizing safety above all else. With guidance from local offices such as Austin Public Health, Center For Disease Control (CDC), and top-tier nationally recognized training protocols from Star-Guard Elite (SGE), our goal is to keep staff safe while offering safe services and facilities to the public. Below are answers to common questions.

### **What are class sizes like?**

In order to maintain 6 feet social distance, courses will be limited to 5 participants per instructor, with a maximum of 10 participants. Formerly, classes had upwards of 40 participants. Participants are kept in the same group throughout the training course.

### **Are the trainings indoors or outdoors?**

The courses will be held both indoors and outdoors. However, the majority of the instruction will be outdoors.

### **Do I need a negative COVID test to participate?**

Prior to beginning each day's course work, the instructors will conduct temperature checks and COVID-19 symptom checks on each participant. While a negative COVID-19 test is not required, we expect trainees not to engage in high-risk behavior in order to maintain safety.

### **Does everyone wear a mask?**

Yes, all participants are required to wear a mask during training except when practicing in-water rescues or CPR scenarios.

### **How is equipment sanitized?**

Following guidelines set by the CDC and SGE, manikins and any other rescue equipment (rescue tubes, backboards, etc.) are sanitized between each usage using alcohol wipes or a bleach solution. Manikin lungs are also replaced between each usage.

### **Will I need to do pool rescues on other people?**

Human contact is avoided as often as possible to help minimize the spread of COVID-19. Due to the nature of the training and the job, some person-to-person contact is required during the course. Medical-grade manikins are used to practice most in-water skills and CPR.

Each participant will have a dedicated, disposable set of lungs to practice with. In addition, there will always be a lifeguard rescue ready, providing surveillance duty while anyone is in the water. Meet our training manikin, [Ruth Lee!](#)

**Is there ever mouth to mouth contact?**

There will be no instances where mouth-to-mouth contact is required. CPR requires the need for lifeguards to administer ventilation breaths as opposed to standard compression-only technique. In these cases, one-way breather masks are used between the unresponsive person and the lifeguard. Practice of this lifesaving technique will be done with medical-grade manikins.

**How do you make sure everyone is doing what they're supposed to?**

Training and certification must be completed in order to be hired for a position. People that do not follow the rules will be asked to leave and will not be considered for hire. Unsafe behavior is never acceptable.

**What happens if I get COVID-19?**

Should a team member contract COVID-19, they may use their accrued sick leave or take unpaid leave while they recover.