

Pool Use Policy

Essential Summary

Youth Justice NSW (YJNSW) has a duty of care to both young people under their supervision and employees under the *NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

YJNSW also has responsibility under the *Children (Detention Centres) Act 1987* and the *Children (Detention Centres) Regulation 2015* to maintain discipline and good order among young people, facilitate proper control and management of YJNSW centres, and to protect the centre's safety and security.

Swimming pools at YJNSW centres provide young people with activities that promote health and wellbeing. This policy ensures the safety of young people by providing YJNSW employees with maintenance and supervision requirements of the swimming pool.

This policy outlines:

- aquatic programs and activities
- pool supervision requirements

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1 Scope

This policy applies to YJNSW custodial employees who are involved in the safe and secure supervision of young people involved in swimming pool programs or activities.

2 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide supervision requirements of the swimming pool
- clarify employee and young people's responsibilities in relation to the use of swimming pools
- ensure the swimming pool is used in a safe manner

3 Definitions

Aquatic activities means an organised pool activity, having clearly defined rules or tasks and a set of goals or objectives

Bather load means a measure of the number of bathers in the pool

4 Pool supervision

4.1 Maximum bather loads

For YJNSW to effectively manage the health and safety risks associated with the swimming pool, a maximum of one unit (15 young people) only may utilise the swimming pool area at any given time. General structured, recreation aquatic programs and/or activities must be organised for each use of the pool by young people.

The maximum bather load may be increased for individual activities such as sports carnivals by the Centre Manager, if a risk assessment is in place.

4.2 YJNSW aquatic activity

Programs and activities must be organised, with clear defined rules or tasks and goals or objectives. Structured programs and/or activities enable effective supervision strategies to be developed and assist to prevent 'rough play' and inappropriate behaviour occurring.

A bank of swimming pool approved programs and activities must be developed in order to ensure a variety of programs or activities can be scheduled prior to pool use. This will provide structure and allow for pre-preparation of required supervision and pool resources.

Aquatic programs and activities include:

- fitness programs e.g. water aerobics
- swimming, walking or novelty races
- team carnivals
- inclusion of the pool in mini triathlons

- water sports e.g. water polo
- 'free' swimming pool 'play' (must be kept to a minimum amount of time)

Certain conditions may require increased supervision based on the type of activity, the swimming ability, and behaviour of participants.

Employee responsibilities during structured aquatic programs and activities include:

- following sun protection directions (see section 4.8 *Sun Protection*)
- facilitating planned scheduled pool programs or activities
- supervising young people, including considering their positioning, scanning techniques, recognition of swimmers and communication
- implementing and enforcing safe swimming practices while educating and liaising with young people
- assessing risks and act in safe and professional manner
- implementing emergency responses when required.

4.3 Supervision of aquatic activities

YJNSW must provide a ratio of one supervising employee for every five young people in the pool, with a minimum of two employees anytime the swimming pool is in use, to ensure high levels of security and supervision are maintained. Additional employees may be required to assist with supervision depending on the program, activity, or young people's behaviour. If a young person requests to use the toilet, a minimum of two employees must remain within the swimming pool area to supervise the remaining young people.

Supervising employees must hold a current first aid qualification and have been previously inducted and trained in the centre's emergency management procedures. All officers supervising young people within the swimming pool area must be competent in swimming and water safety e.g. self-report being able to swim the length of a pool, tread water and be comfortable placing their heads underwater.

4.4 Swimming proficiency of young people

Prior to any aquatic activity, YJNSW employees must determine the aquatic proficiency of young people by asking if they can swim. Non-proficient swimmers should be allowed to engage in other dry activities within the pool area or participate in shallow water activities only (water depth of 1.2m or less).

Centres must consider the testing of young people's swimming ability and water safety prior to allowing aquatic activities taking place. If a young person refuses to participate in any aquatic program, an alternative program must be offered to the young person.

As a general guide, young people should be able to comfortably swim the length of the pool, tread water for one minute and have the breath control required to comfortably place their head under water.

4.5 Pool supervision strategies

Supervision strategies are used to increase attention and concentration while reducing boredom. Scanning positions should not last any more than five minutes before changing posture, position and scanning pattern.

Employees are required to regularly move (be mobile) around the swimming pool while visually scanning the pool, monitoring each young person and their behavioural characteristics.

It is important for all supervising officers within the swimming pool area, to position themselves in a manner that will allow supervision of the entire group. Changing positions frequently will help keep supervising employees alert and offer new perspectives of the area.

Close supervision from various angles ensures that young people are safe while using the pool.

4.6 Rules for pool use

The following actions are **not** permitted:

- running
- bombing
- rough play (including, sparring in or around the pool, holding other young people under water, sitting on shoulders)
- jumping
- flips
- diving
- abusive or offensive behaviour
- refusing to get out
- spitting or blowing of nose into the pool
- discharge of bodily fluids in the pool

All young people must abide by the “rules of pool use” for the swimming pool. Contravention of the above rules may result in a misbehaviour report being issued by the supervising officer, including restriction from accessing the pool for an amount of time.

The “rules for pool use” signage must be posted in the pool area in clear view. Young people must be reminded of the rules each time before entering the pool area.

With a risk assessment in place and the endorsement of the Centre Manager, some actions such as jumping and diving can occur as part of a swimming program, which is supervised by a qualified swimming instructor.

4.7 Consequences for young people disobeying pool rules

Suggested consequences for young people who break the pool rules, depending on the severity of the issue, are to be given:

- first occurrence - a verbal warning
- second occurrence - a written misbehaviour caution
- third occurrence – loss of leisure-banning from the pool activities for a short period of time (1-4 days)
- continued occurrences – banning for longer periods of time

4.8 Sun protection

All employees and young people must follow the prescribed UV protection measures when utilising the pool area:

- sunscreen must be applied 20 minutes before going outside and re-applied again every 2 hours
- supervising employees are encouraged to wear both a broad-brimmed hat and sunglasses.
- if a young person has sustained sunburn on a previous program or activity, they must receive a medical clearance from the Justice Health nurse prior to participating in any pool activities again.

5 Safety

5.1 First aid stations

Wall mounted first aid kits are located in each unit office. Where possible, injuries and illness should be treated on the pool concourse, or transferred to the clinic for treatment by Justice Health.

YJNSW centre management is responsible for ensuring regular inspection, maintenance and re-stocking of the first aid stations and equipment located in the units and around the centre.

Consideration must be given to the implementation of rescue and first aid equipment to be located within the swimming pool area. Storage solutions such as a steel security cabinet may provide adequate protection from weathering and vandalism.

5.2 Controlling access to the pool

The swimming pool area must be physically secured at all times via a lockable gate and perimeter fencing to prevent unauthorised access and egress. Employees must lock entry and exit points each time they enter and exit the swimming pool area.

5.3 Use of electrical equipment

Aquatic environments increase the level of risk associated with the use of electrical equipment. Constant attention must be given to any electrical equipment in and around the water. An electrical safety switch must be used at all times when operating electrical equipment and appropriate warning and safety signs must also be displayed to inform employees of the risk. No electrical equipment is to be used within 3 metres of the swimming pool. All General Power Outlets (GPOs) located within the pool or plant room areas must have water proof covers installed and maintained.

5.4 Health and hygiene

- Young people must be encouraged to use the toilet and shower before entering the water and after the session.
- Young people must wear appropriate footwear and clothing to and from the swimming pool area.
- Appropriate swimming attire must be worn when entering and utilising the swimming pool.
- Young people must have access to a clean towel on completion of the swim session.
- To prevent any water contamination, young people who have contagious infections must not be allowed to enter the water. This includes infections such as sickness and diarrhoea, cold sores, conjunctivitis, open and infected wounds, etc.

- Young people who appear to be unwell, or are suspected of being unwell must have medical clearance prior to entering the swimming pool.

5.5 Emergency bodily fluid contamination management

If the pool is contaminated with vomit, stool or a significant amount of blood, then all young people should be directed to exit the pool, and the *Pool Maintenance Policy* consulted for directions on how to manage the contamination.

6 References

Policy

Pool Maintenance Policy

Resources

RLSSA Guidelines for Safe Pool Operations

Department of Health NSW Public Swimming Pool and Spa Pool Advisory Document 2013

Control of Workplace Chemicals Procedure

Hazardous Substance Management Procedure.

Legislation

NSW Health Act 2010

NSW Public Health Regulation 2012- schedule 1 Requirements for public swimming pools and Spa pools.

Work Health & Safety Act 2011

Work Health & Safety Regulation 2011

7 Document information

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8 Document history

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1	5 September 2019	New policy.