

First Year Guard FAQ

This is a compilation of the most frequently asked questions we have received from the first year guards as they embarked on their journey at the Deerfield Park District pools. We hope this builds confidence as well as ending the “us vs them” mindset. We have gathered these answers from returning guards to benefit the first year guards. We are ending the separation by reaching out, answering questions, and overall creating relationships with everyone on staff.

Scanning	1	What are good scanning techniques/patterns?	When scanning your zone you can either go up and down or side to side. This is a personal preference you decide when you first start but make sure you are consistent with this pattern and not robot like. You should be moving your head, not just your eyes.
	2	How long is a full scan including bottom scan?	A full scan is 30 seconds but you should be scanning your entire zone within 10 seconds which includes a bottom scan. Lifeguards should be able to recognize and respond to any drowning/distressed victim within a 30 second time frame.
Rotations	3	How do chair rotations work at Deerspring and Mitchell?	Both Mitchell and Deerspring pools have maps that were created to demonstrate the correct rotations for any shift throughout the day. Refer to these if you have any questions while looking at the rotation posted by your manager. Also feel free to ask your manager, headguard, or any other guards if you have questions!

Rotations	4	When do you come down from chairs during closing?	During closing shifts do not come down from the chair until the manager or headguard on the shift instructs you to do so. It is your responsibility to stay in the chair until they tell you, you can come down. They will do that by doing a short double whistle and using a hand motion gesturing to come down. Also don't forget to put your umbrella down at the end of the night!
Cleaning	5	What are the cleaning expectations?	The expectation for cleaning is that everyone is working together to create a clean environment for patrons and our community. This includes the locker rooms, family locker rooms, deck, grass, concessions, the guard office, and the pool in general.
VAT Drops	6	What is a VAT drop?	A timmy is a form of a VAT (Vigilance Awareness Testing) drop that is used to ensure that lifeguards are vigilant, attentive, and prepared in a pseudo-emergency situation.
	7	What is the purpose of a VAT drop?	The purpose of a VAT drop is to ensure lifeguards are paying attention to their zones, to practice their skills in a simulated higher-stress situation, and to learn from feedback given based on their care.
	8	Who can give VAT drops?	The aquatic coordinator can give VAT drops at any time they deem necessary as well as managers that earn the privilege to give VAT drops.

VAT Drops	9	Are VAT drops graded/what are the consequences?	If a VAT drop is failed the team will be remediated by management immediately. If they remediate and pass the second one it is graded as a “pass with remediation.” If the fail was egregious they will be remediated individually by management either on their shift or at an inservice and potentially sent home if we aren’t confident in their ability to scan/respond appropriately.
	10	Where is the fake oxygen/AED located for VAT drops?	At Deerspring Pool the fake oxygen tank and fake AED we use for VAT drops is located in the red closet in the guard office. At Mitchell Pool the fake oxygen tank is above the guard lockers and the fake AED is located in the cabinet above the sound system.
Equipment	11	How to connect the BVM to the oxygen tank?	When connecting the BVM to the oxygen tank, you will attach the plastic tubing between the flowmeter and the delivery device. Make sure you don’t connect the tubing before you expel foreign matter (oxygen).
	12	How do you properly turn on the oxygen tank?	Use the cylinder wrench to turn the oxygen valve on.
Whistles	13	How do you do opening/closing whistles?	The opening and closing whistles begin with a double short whistle with a twirling finger to get the other guards attention, then it is a long whistle with a dip at the end which indicates the pool is open or closed.

Whistles	14	How do you do 5 minute posture check whistles?	The five minute posture checks are very important and are required. This is three short whistles followed by standing up and repositioning yourself in the chair. This helps us guards keep on focus and maintain a comfortable position.
	15	What whistle code do you use if someone needs first aid on deck?	If someone comes up to you while you are in the chair requesting first aid, you should do a short double whistle for a manager to come assist.
General	16	When is adult swim?	2:30 and 4:30 every single day but this depends on how crowded the pool is.
	17	How do you know when/if you call adult swim?	Adult swim is called everyday at 2:30 and 4:30 with the exception of low occupancy. If that is the case a manager will let you know and adult swim will not be called.
	18	How do you handle the pressure of being in an actual save?	Every scenario/rescue is very different. There is no right answer to this, you need to fall back on your training. One of the biggest things is to be CONFIDENT. It is very important, confidence will take you a long way.
Mentorship	19	How does the mentorship program work?	Any non-member of the aquatics leadership team can approach someone who is in the leadership team and ask to be a mentee. Vice versa, if a leadership member sees someone with potential, who demonstrates initiative, and cares for the pools and its success, they can approach a non-leadership member.

Mentorship	20	Who can be a mentor/mentee?	A mentor is anybody a part of the aquatics leadership team. A mentee is anyone not a part of the aquatic leadership team.
	21	Does doing a mentorship project guarantee promotion?	No, completing a mentorship project does not automatically guarantee that you will be promoted for the position you applied for.