

Buddy Check-In System Guide

Improving Vigilance, Teamwork, and Safety One Shift at a Time

Purpose: The Buddy Check-In System is designed to increase lifeguard vigilance, reduce complacency, and foster a culture of peer accountability and communication. By assigning buddy pairs at the start of each shift and encouraging pre-rotation check-ins, we ensure each guard starts their station focused, prepared, and supported— even if their buddy is not rotating them.

How It Works:

1. At the beginning of each shift, Head Guard/Manager uses the “wheel decide” spinner to assign buddy pairs randomly
 - a. These buddy assignments stay the same for the entire shift.
 - b. Buddies are expected to check in with each other before their own rotations.
2. Each guard is responsible for initiating a brief check-in with their buddy before they start their rotation— even if their buddy is not replacing them
3. The 3-Point Check-In:
 - a. Scan and Stance Reminder
 - i. Phones away, tube in hand, eyes on the water.
 - b. Distraction Level Reset
 - i. “How focused are you right now on a scale of 1-10”.
 - ii. Take a grounding breath together if needed.
 - c. Safety Awareness
 - i. Briefly mention any guest behavior or unusual traffic.
 - ii. Share any feedback or tips from the previous rotation.

Why It Works:

- ❖ Ensures every guard enters the stand with renewed focus and support.
- ❖ Fosters team culture, even when you’re not rotating directly with your buddy.
- ❖ Promotes self-check-in habits and leadership skills.
- ❖ Creates a consistent structure across shifts and teams.