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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

All content, including text, graphics, images and information, in this document is for informational purposes only and not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical or legal advice of any kind. You should take no action or decide not to act in reliance on the content herein. We recommend you follow the health directives of applicable local, state, and federal entities and you should seek attention form a medical provider with respect to any particular health issue or problem. You should contact an attorney if you need legal advice with respect to any particular issue or problem. Knowledge and circumstances are changing constantly and, as such, the Aquatics Coalition makes no representations, warranties or guarantees that any content herein will always be up-to-date, accurate or complete. The Aquatics Coalition disclaims all liability with respect to any actions you take or do not take based on any or all content herein to the fullest extent permitted by law. Note that the content herein may not reflect the views of all members of the Aquatics Coalition.
POOL REOPENING SAFETY PLAN

PREOPENING CHECKLIST
This checklist focuses on items that need to be addressed when reopening an aquatic facility that has been closed for an extended period of time due to COVID-19 or when performing the normal seasonal reopening. These items are based on current CDC guidelines and recommendations (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/building-water-system.html), the Model Aquatic Health Code, and industry best practices. Please note that these recommendations do not replace any guidelines or mandates set by local or state governments.

Documentation & Policy

☐ Consult with state/local governments about any new COVID-19 related guidelines
☐ Review and update Standard Operating Procedures
☐ Review your facility’s Hazard Communication Standard policy to potential health hazards and the recommended protective measures for common active disinfectant agents.
☐ Create a COVID Cleaning and Disinfection Plan to inactivate the COVID-19 virus and other germs
CDC Guidance for Reopening Buildings After Prolonged Shutdown or Reduced Operation.
☐ Either establish, review, or update a Safety Plan for your facility
☐ Identify whether a comprehensive Water Management Program is needed and either establish, review, or update a Water Management Program.
☐ Create or update documentation procedures, which shall include:
  o Opening/Daily/Closing Checklists
  o COVID Cleaning and Disinfection Checklist
  o COVID Cleaning and Disinfection Log, including the time each shared object or a surface touched by multiple people is cleaned and then disinfected along with the location
  o Closure Report for incidents involving recreational water–associated illness, bodily fluids, or suspected contamination

Operations & Maintenance

☐ Purchase FDA/NIOSH-approved Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff and public. This includes, but is not limited to:
  o PPE for staff e.g. gloves and masks
  o Public-use supplies e.g. hand sanitizer and extra masks
  o Items used for engaging with the public i.e. thermometers
☐ Establish specific Entry and Exit Plan for both public and staff
☐ Purchase and properly label cleaning supplies and EPA-approved disinfectants used by staff during daily operations. More information on the disinfectants EPA expects to disinfect the COVID-19 virus is available on the EPA website
☐ Consult an aquatics designer and a manufacturer about which cleaners and disinfectants are safe to use repeatedly on shared objects and surfaces to avoid damage
☐ Create proper signage to support new policies, including:
Reminders to stay home if infected or possibly infected, to wear a cloth mask and to avoid being inside the facility if possible (i.e. parents during swim lessons or swim team members not swimming or not about to swim)

Information on proper social (physical) distancing and hand-washing requirements

Requirements to enter facility

Explanations of safe use of equipment and amenities while social distancing

Staff Training

Staff training should include the following elements:

- Information and training on new cleaning and disinfection procedures, PPE requirements, and a clear communication of expectations
- How to enforce and educate patrons the policies, entry requirements, and ensure proper facility use
- Training and practice of rescue and emergency skills, including Emergency Action Plan scenarios, with PPE use
- Certification in Bloodborne Pathogens Training
ENHANCED CLEANING & DISINFECTION FOR AQUATIC FACILITIES

Shared objects and surfaces touched by multiple people should first be cleaned and then disinfected with an EPA-approved disinfectant. Cleaning prior to disinfection removes anything, i.e. dirt or body oils, that might protect the COVID-19 virus from the disinfectant. Shared objects should be cleaned and disinfected between users. Commonly touched surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected at least daily; depending on feasibility and the amount of touching this should increase in frequency.

CLEANING CHECKLISTS

This checklist is intended to help develop policies to protect the health of guests and employees, and to outline proper cleaning and disinfection protocols for cleaning staff. Before being asked to perform cleaning and disinfection tasks, cleaning staff should be properly and adequately trained.

This training should include when to use personal protective equipment (PPE); what PPE is necessary; how to properly don (put on), use, and doff (take off) PPE; and how to properly dispose of PPE. It is the role of operators to ensure workers are trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals and disinfectants used in the workplace in accordance with OSHA’s Hazard Communication standard (29 CFR 1910.1200). It is also necessary to comply with OSHA’s standards on Bloodborne Pathogens (29 CFR 1910.1030), including proper disposal of regulated waste, and PPE (29 CFR 1910.132).

Furthermore, it is important that the facility choose cleaning products and disinfectants that are chemically compatible with one another and meet the needs of the facility. Surfaces in and immediately around the aquatic venue and shared objects in the water should be cleaned with a bleach solution; the CDC’s recipe can be found here. If inappropriate cleaners and disinfectants are used, the repeated cleaning and disinfecting of surfaces and shared objects can cause them damage; check with the aquatic designer and manufacturers to determine which products are best for your surfaces and shared objects, respectively.

Daily Cleaning Checklist

While ideally the following procedures would occur multiple times a day, depending on the site and the surface/shared object the frequency of cleaning will vary from facility to facility.

☐ Prepare and use proper PPEs
☐ Prepare cleaning and disinfecting solutions, following label instructions
☐ Clean and then disinfect all entry and exit door handles
☐ Clean and then disinfect all handrails and ladders
☐ Clean and then disinfect all benches, bleachers, tables, chairs
☐ Clean and then disinfect all trashcans
☐ Clean and then disinfect all lockers and areas where guests put their belongings
☐ Between each user, clean and then disinfect shared workout equipment e.g. kick boards, pull buoys, fins, barbells floats, etc.
☐ Clean and then disinfect play structures, toys, and special features
☐ Clean and then disinfect all surfaces that are frequently touched, especially those touched by people from multiple households i.e. door handles
☐ Discard unused non-stable cleaning and disinfecting solutions (i.e. staff prepared bleach solutions)
☐ Remove and dispose of PPEs properly

Daily Checklist

☐ Checkout process for shared objects, including life jackets, tubes, water aerobics belts, etc.
☐ Clean and then disinfect devices that are checked in immediately before storing properly
  ☐ Ensure that the cleaned and disinfected shared objects are separate from used ones
☐ Clean and then disinfect all windows and walls touched by hands
☐ Clean and then disinfect pool decks, stairs, landings, signage, focusing on areas that are frequently touched
☐ Clean and then disinfect restrooms and locker rooms
☐ Check and prepare PPEs for next day to ensure adequate supply
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR ENHANCED CLEANING AND DISINFECTION OF AQUATIC FACILITIES

In accordance with CDC recommendations, facilities must implement measures, which include enhanced cleaning and disinfecting procedures, to prevent the spread of germs, including SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The following guidance was developed for aquatic staff to enhance their cleaning and disinfection procedures during the cold and flu season, times of heavy use of the facility, and during public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. ENHANCED CLEANING FOR PREVENTION

   A. General guidance:

   i. Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting, focusing on high-touch surfaces, such as pool ladders and handrails, benches, tables, faucets, doors, shared workout equipment, and checkout items and high-touch surfaces in public restrooms and exercise rooms. Increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting with attention to these areas helps remove bacteria and viruses, including the novel coronavirus.

   ii. Practice good hand hygiene:

       • Wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.

       • If soap and warm water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

   B. Safety guidelines during cleaning and disinfection:

   i. Wear PPE as recommended by safety data sheets (SDS)

   ii. Store chemicals in labeled, closed containers. Follow label instructions on safe storage, including securing them away from children.

   C. Cleaning and disinfection of surfaces:

   i. Clean surfaces and shared objects that are visibly soiled before disinfecting. If surfaces or shared objects are dirty to sight or touch, they should be cleaned using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

   ii. Use an EPA-registered disinfectant for use against the novel coronavirus. Refer to the list of disinfectants EPA expects to inactivate SARS-CoV-2.

   iii. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for safe and effective use of all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., dilution concentration, application method and contact time, required ventilation, and use of personal protective equipment).

   iv. Consult manufacturer recommendations on cleaning products appropriate for electronics. If no guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or spray containing at least 70% alcohol. Use of alcohol-based products may reduce risk of damage to sensitive machine components. Whenever possible, consider using wipeable covers for electronics. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids

   v. Follow CDC Guidelines for effective disinfection. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html If a COVID-19 case is confirmed at the facility, facility staff are required to follow the guidance Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfection after Notification of a Confirmed Case of COVID-19 outlined in this document. The CDC website has specific guidance for what to do if a COVID-19 case occurs at a swimming facility.
2. ENHANCED CLEANING AND DISINFECTION AFTER NOTIFICATION OF A CONFIRMED CASE OF COVID-19

This protocol is for the cleaning and disinfecting of areas where a person with COVID-19 spent time at the facility. After notification of a person with confirmed COVID-19 at a facility, the following cleaning and disinfection protocol will be followed:

A. Areas where a COVID-19 positive person spent time will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. The cleaning scope will be implemented based on the risk of potential contamination as determined by the Operator, in coordination with the impacted areas within the facility.

B. Facility staff will do the following (as applicable):
   i. Identify areas and shared objects in the area that require restricted access during and immediately following enhanced cleaning.
   ii. Communicate with impacted department(s).
   iii. Coordinate with building coordinators/managers.

C. The cleaning crew will:
   i. If possible, wait more than 24 hours to clean and disinfect, allowing time for the virus to degrade.
   ii. Follow the Enhanced Cleaning for Prevention guidance outlined in this document.
   iii. Open windows to the outside to increase air circulation, if possible.
   iv. If an outside contractor is used for cleaning and disinfection, the proposed scope of work, including the products and their respective safety data sheets (SDSs), and application methods must be reviewed by the operator prior to work commencing.

D. Wear the required PPE during cleaning and disinfecting:
   i. Disposable gloves, Safety glasses/goggles, etc.
   ii. Use additional PPE as indicated by the chemicals SDS document and/or product label.
   iii. All staff must be fully trained on donning and doffing required PPE to prevent cross contamination

POOL AREA DISINFECTION GUIDELINES

1. Ammonia-free Disinfectants
   A. Not all disinfectants are appropriate for pool areas. Utilizing disinfectants containing ammonia can create chloramines when introduced to the pool water. It is recommended that chlorine/bleach-based disinfectants are used around pool areas. Ammonia-based disinfectants may be used in areas that will not result in the disinfectant being introduced into the water.

2. Cleaning practices
   A. Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting, focusing on high-touch surfaces, such as ladders and handrails, in public restrooms, in exercise rooms, benches, tables, faucets, doors, shared workout equipment, and checkout items and on high-touch surfaces in public restrooms and exercise rooms. Increased frequency of cleaning and disinfecting with attention to these areas helps remove germs, including SARS-CoV-2.
   B. Always clean a surface or object before disinfecting it
   C. Use an EPA-registered disinfectant for use against coronavirus. Refer to the list of disinfectants EPA expects to inactivate SARS-CoV-2.
D. Follow the manufacturer’s instructions for safe and effective use of all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., dilution concentration, application method and contact time, required ventilation, and use of personal protective equipment).

E. Review your facility’s Hazard Communication Standard policy to potential health hazards and the recommended protective measures for common active disinfectant agents.

F. Add any additional cleaners your facility is utilizing to your SDS information.

G. Resources:
   - [CDC recommendations for disinfecting your facility](https://www.cdc.gov)
   - [EPA disinfectant list](https://www.epa.gov)

3. Equipment

   A. Staff should clean and disinfect all equipment in the morning and evening at minimum. Otherwise all equipment should be disinfected between users.

   B. Keep clean and disinfected equipment separate from used equipment

   C. Consider selling all packages of individual exercise equipment at the front desk or by staff. For example: kickboards, buoys, fins, etc.

   D. If equipment needs to be offered for community use put a plan in place to clean and disinfect between users
      
      i. Set up cleaning stations for patrons to utilize after they use equipment, which should include cleaners and disinfectant wipes. However, be sure to keep cleaners away from young children.

      ii. Disinfectant wipes should be available for both employees and members to use when needed, so that everyone involved has peace of mind.

      iii. These wipes and sanitizers can be found [here](https://www.example.com).

POOL WATER

Before Reopening

1. Water Management Plans

   A. Facilities that have been vacant may have stagnant or standing water in legs of the building water systems.

   B. For aquatic facilities, hot tub aeration lines and facility showers are most concerning, however any system that moves water through air can be a concern (i.e. safety showers, water fountains, display fountains, eye wash stations).

   C. Creating a [water management program](https://www.example.com) is part of the 8 steps to take before your business or building reopens

Water Treatment

There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through recreational water. Follow the Water Treatment and Disinfectant standards established by your state or local government or the [CDC’s Model Aquatic Health Code](https://www.cdc.gov).
OUTBREAK POLICY - CONTACT TRACING

If a guest or a staff member tests positive for COVID-19, follow these procedures:

1. The individual must let the facility know immediately that they are self-reporting symptoms of COVID-19, have had a positive test for COVID-19, or (excluding those who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months) were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days.
2. The Facility will notify the local health authorities of the COVID-19 case.
3. In conjunction with the health department, staff, swimmers, and renters (as feasible) will be notified of potential COVID-19 exposures while maintaining confidentiality.
4. Facility will be closed for more than 24 hours prior to cleaning and then disinfecting.
5. Individuals are expected to self-quarantine or consult their healthcare provider if they are exposed to someone who is COVID-19 positive.
DEHUMIDIFIER RE-COMMISSIONING CHECK LIST

If the dehumidifier has been decommissioned for more than 2 months, it is recommended that the facility contact the manufacturer to obtain their full “new” unit commission form and have a qualified mechanical contractor hired to perform the factory requirements.

The following short form list should be performed if the dehumidifier has been operational, but the pool is not being utilized.

☐ Verify that the power supply matches the rating plate. Tighten all field and factory wiring
☐ Inspect air filters. Clean or replace if dirt and debris visible on more than 75% of surface.
☐ Check field and factory piping for leaks using a refrigerant detector
☐ Inspect condensate drain and P-Trap
  o Should be free of debris
  o Trapped and primed with water
☐ Check rotation of blower on 3 phase units
☐ Check rotation of remote condenser fans.
☐ Verify connection to building management system

Optional Equipment

- 120-volt circuit run to heat trace is powered up for winter operation
- Gas heater
  o Lines checked for leaks
  o Condensate line checked
  o Vents verified – inspect the stack for secure tethering
  o Record gas pressure entering the unit
  o Verify flame visible through ports – verify heater operation with a combustion analyzer and record data
- Pool water interface
  o Ensure air purged from the lines
  o Aux pool heater and booster pump interlocked with dehumidifier.
  o Water condenser circuits connected to dehumidifier with flow meters and balancing valves installed in circuit.
  o Water flow verified
  o Inspect water piping for leaks

Upon operational start-up, record following for the compressor and refrigeration system.

- Amperage draw on all three legs (L1/L2/L3)
- Superheat
- Subcooling
- Compressor oil level
- Head pressure
- Suction pressure

Air balancing the system for proper airflow to match rating plate. Record air volume.

  o Supply air volume
  o Return air volume
  o Outside air volume
  o Exhaust air volume
Operational Checks

☐ Check setpoints and return to desired air temp and Relative Humidity setting and water setpoint
☐ Confirm that dehumidifier is running and creating condensate
☐ Make sure that the unit is commanded to Occupied.
  o Confirm that Outdoor Air Damper is open and bringing in fresh air.
☐ Confirm that Exhaust fan is running.
☐ Confirm that space is in negative pressure.
  o You can check this with a piece of tissue at a door that enters the pool room. If the tissue is pulled into the room when the door is slightly opened, then you are good. If the tissue is pushed away from the pool room, then you need to check exhaust fan/outdoor air/doors to the room etc.)
COMMUNICATION & SIGNAGE

Aquatic facility guests will have many questions and concerns about resuming aquatic activities after COVID-19 closures and about remaining safe while in the facility. You can prepare and protect your guests by providing clear communication before and during their visit to your facility. Consistent and frequent updates on your website, social media, and other outlets will help the community know what you are doing to protect them and what to the requirements are to use the Facility.

ENCOURAGE ACTIONS THAT PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

The first step to avoiding a COVID-19 outbreak is to encourage guests to stay home if they are displaying symptoms of the virus, socially (physically) distance, wear a cloth mask, and properly wash their hands.

COVID-19 Symptoms and High-Risk Populations

We recommend that guests should not visit an aquatic facility if any of the following apply to them:

- Have symptoms of COVID-19, including fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, and fatigue; a full list of symptoms can be found [here](#).
- Are 65 years or older, live in a nursing or long-term care facility or have a condition that makes them more susceptible to COVID-19, including those listed below. More information about these high-risk groups can be found [here](#).
  - Chronic lung, kidney, or liver disease
  - Chronic asthma
  - Compromised or weakened immune system
  - Obesity
  - Diabetes

Anyone who feels sick, is infected with COVID-19, or might have been infected by COVID-19 should remain home and quarantine or isolate as recommended by CDC. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, practice social distancing, wear a cloth mask, cover sneezes and coughs, and wash hands regularly, with soap, for at least 20 seconds.

Social Distancing

Guests should maintain at least 6 feet of distance from those they do not live with. Your facility should facilitate social distancing by limiting the capacity and using signs, arrows, and other indicators (for example physical cues in the water, such as lane lines, and out of the water, such as furniture or belt barrier) to demonstrate where guests and staff should stand and walk.

Cloth Masks

Guests should be required to wear cloth masks that cover the nose and mouth when they walk around your facility but not when they are in the water. Wet cloth masks can be difficult to breathe through and do not slow the spread of SARS-CoV-2 as well as dry cloth masks. Cloth mask requirements should be shared through social media, the website, and in the facility. If guests do not abide by facility cloth mask requirements, they should be asked to leave.
Handwashing

CDC tells us that regular handwashing is one of the best ways to stop the spread of germs to others. Your facility must ensure restrooms have soap and other supplies available for guests and facility staff and will place hand sanitizer in places in the facility where soap and water are not readily available.

Additionally, signs that encourage guests to wash or sanitize their hands will be placed throughout the facility. The CDC, WHO, and other organizations have posters available for free download on their websites. Alternatively, your facility can create its own posters and displays regarding handwashing.
PROGRAMMING
Aquatic facilities offer several types of programming that require different plans to prepare for reopening after closure and to maintain safe standards during the COVID-19 pandemic. From the time guests and staff enter your facility to the time they leave, it is your responsibility to ensure their health and safety, maintain water safety and slow the spread of SARS-CoV-2.

PLANNING FOR PROGRAMMING
The CDC has not mandated occupancy restrictions, but rather that practices and events must allow staff and swimmers to stay at least 6 feet apart from those they do not live with, both in and out of the water, by providing:

- Physical cues or guides, such as lane lines in the water or chairs and tables on the deck
- Visual cues, such as tape on the decks, floors, or sidewalks
- Signs

Additionally, below are some general guidelines to follow when making programmatic decisions:

- Be clear and consistent about expectations and enforce policies
- Move dryland outside where possible
- Utilize a staff member to help athletes move from one area of the facility to another
- Limit group sizes and implement staggered sessions
- Account for social distancing when planning programming

SWIMMING SAFELY
When guests arrive at your facility, you have an opportunity to track them as well as encourage them to socially distance and wear a cloth mask. Below are some guidelines for your guests.

BEFORE SWIMMING
- To maintain your capacity limit and reduce unnecessary time inside, guests should not arrive at the facility more than 5 minutes before their scheduled swim session
- Upon their arrival at your facility, guests should be encouraged to wash their hands with disinfectant soap and water for (for 20 seconds or longer) or use a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily available, before going to the pool
- A coach or staff member should ask guests, as they enter, if they feel ill in any way, specifically listing certain symptoms, and send home those athletes reporting feeling ill or experiencing symptoms
- Guests should arrive pool-ready to avoid unnecessary time in the locker rooms
- Guests should not share equipment
- Guests should bring a full bottle of water to avoid touching a tap or water fountain handle

Guests should avoid touching gates, fences, benches, etc.

WHILE SWIMMING
- Guests should follow directions for spacing and stay at least six feet apart from others.
- Guests should not make physical contact with others, such as shaking hands or giving a high five.
- Guests should avoid touching their face.
- Guests should avoid sharing food, drinks, or towels.
- Guests should maintain appropriate social distancing from other athletes when taking a break.
- Guests should wear their suit to and from practice.
The following diagrams represent athletes maintaining over 6 feet of distance while swimming and at rest.

18 Swimmers in a 25-yard, 6 lane pool:

27 swimmers in a 25-yard, 6 lane pool:
60 swimmers in a 50-meter, 10 lane pool:

25-yard, on deck, sit down slide sets in circles:

Swimmers maintain 6 feet apart. Mark deck with 2-inch wide colored duct tape.
Sit down/slide in to enter water.

End of set climb out and go to assigned spot.
The more “eyes” on deck the better.

Use cones or other barriers to help with separation - deck needs to be wide enough to accommodate 6’ of social distance.
AFTER SWIMMING

- Guests should leave the facility as soon as reasonably possible after practice.
- Guests should wash their hands thoroughly or use a hand sanitizer after leaving the pool.
- Guests should not use the locker room or changing area
- Guests should shower at home and wear their suit to and from practice
- No extra-curricular or social activity should take place.
- Guests should not congregate after swimming.

Competitive Swimming

Clubs planning to host or attend competition must develop a Return to Competition plan. The plan must address the key considerations above and include the elements listed in the sections below.

Return to competition can only occur when and if your local authorities have deemed it safe to return to competition. In creating a Return to Competition plan, clubs are encouraged to consider the following.

- When to return, including an ability to add restrictions (move backward in phases) if there are additional waves of infection in your area.
- What operating adjustments your organization will make in hosting and attending competitions.
- A communications plan for all stakeholders.
- A designation of a point person or team responsible for the Return to Competition plan.
- An ability to monitor the outcomes of what is happening as you return to competition so that you can make needed adjustments.

All plans must comply with facility, local, state, and federal public health requirements.

- If there is an ambiguity between recommended guidelines, the most stringent should apply or local counsel should be consulted to provide guidance to follow
- Each club should have a COVID-19 liaison/committee responsible for staying up to date on community and state recommendations and any associated changes.
- Each club should have a point person responsible for the club’s Return to Competition plan
- Mandated capacity limits must be followed.
- Until further notice, eliminate or reduce use of low ventilated spaces as well as rooms that prevent social distancing, (e.g., locker rooms and small dryland rooms) to the extent feasible.
- Until further notice, ingress to facility must include health screening questions and should include temperature screening either at the facility or prior to arrival, no person shall be admitted with a temperature over 100.4 F or in accordance with CDC or local health department recommendations.
STAFF SAFETY

EXPECTATIONS
Staff participation is integral to a successful reopening after closure and to maintaining a safe environment during the COVID-19 outbreak. Your facility should develop virtual or limited face-to-face training to inform staff of COVID-19-related policies for staff, participants, and facility cleanliness. Staff should do the following:

- Stay home if they are not feeling well and especially if they demonstrate symptoms of COVID-19, like fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, and others
- Wash their hands regularly
- Comply with all facility policies, including those regarding social distancing, cloth masks, limitations of capacity in common areas and offices, and others
- Participate in training as needed throughout the pandemic

UNIFORM & PPE
Cloth masks will be required as part of the staff uniforms. Your facility should provide appropriate cloth masks, a back-up supply of disposable masks, and PPE for staff as directed by the responsibilities of the staff member’s job.

MAINTAINING COMMON AREAS
Your facility should limit the number of staff who can occupy common areas. These capacities should be posted on the door and within the common area to allow staff to self-monitor. Staff should be asked to wipe the tables and chairs, specifically the areas they have touched, that they use while in the common areas and break rooms.

SCHEDULING
Scheduling is an important factor to consider when planning for reopening after COVID-19 closures. Using consistent schedules and blocking (cohorting) staff into teams allows for easier contact tracing and limits the interactions of staff because staff will work with a consistent group of people. This will hopefully mean you will have some staff not impacted by an exposure and available to work.
SUPPLIES

Facility | Supplies needed to safely open and operate each facility
- Hand sanitizer stations
- EPA-approved disinfectant sprays
- EPA-approved disinfectant wipes
- EPA-approved disinfectant solutions
- Cleaning products and supplies (e.g., paper towels, sponges, towels, etc.)
- Soap
- Tissues
- No-touch trash cans
- Clean/Dirty Containers and mesh bags for pool items. Clean and dirty items must be kept separately.
- Barricades for marking staging on pool deck
- COVID-19 prevention signage
- A-frames for signage
- Caution Tape
- Entrance/Exit Banners (for one direction foot traffic)
- Large White Board (for staging lanes/swim lessons)
- Markers for social distancing on the floors
- Signage directing patrons through the facility and onto the pool deck

Staff | Supplies needed to keep staff safe while on the job
- Personal hand sanitizers
- Hip Packs
- Personal Sunscreen
- Clipboards
- Grease Pencils
- Gowns (PPE for providing care)
- Face masks – personal
- Face masks – disposable
- Goggles (PPE for providing care)
- Face shield (PPE for providing care)
- Gloves (PPE for providing care)
- HEPA filters for resuscitation mask and BVMs
YMCA INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR AQUATIC FITNESS PROGRAMS DURING COVID-19

As your YMCA adjusts to new restrictions, limitations, and requirements resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, seek to introduce inclusive policies and procedures that prioritize the safety of all. The considerations in this document are designed to support you in doing that. In addition to the considerations shared in this document, always check with state and local health authorities for additional resources and guidance on implementing programs locally.

UNDERSTAND KEY GUIDELINES AND CONSIDERATIONS

As you plan to resume aquatic fitness programming (e.g., Aquatic Fitness and Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Programs), it is essential to consult the following resources to understand the key guidelines that will inform your decisions:

- **Your state and local regulatory agencies.** Consult with state and local officials to ensure your plans meet the unique needs and circumstances of your locality in a way that is feasible, practical, and acceptable.
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s Considerations for Public Pools, Hot Tubs, and Water Playgrounds During COVID-19**
- **Planning Ahead for Your Y: Aquatic Supplement**
- **Aquatic Exercise Association's COVID-19 resources**

The resources above provide specific requirements, considerations, and key questions your Y will need to abide by or answer as you reopen in the following essential areas:

- **Healthy hygiene habits** like frequent handwashing (or hand sanitizing) and covering coughs and sneezes

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• **Maintaining social (physical) distance** of at least six feet apart between people who do not live together

• **The appropriate use of cloth masks** in public settings where required or where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain (Note: cloth masks should **not** be worn in the water, according to the CDC.)

• **Routine cleaning and then disinfecting** of frequently touched surfaces and any shared equipment

• **When to stay home** (e.g., when having symptoms of COVID-19, after testing positive for COVID-19, or [excluding people who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months] after having been exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the last 14 days) and the importance of proactively reporting any symptoms or positive tests

The considerations in this document are supplemental to, and do not replace, the guidelines and considerations in the resources listed above. This document focuses on modifications specific to the delivery and administration of aquatic fitness programs in light of COVID-19. Information in this document is general in nature and specific application will vary. It is not a substitute for healthcare or public health expertise or legal advice on specific issues.

**COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS AND LOCAL AND STATE CODES**

As you seek to modify your policies and procedures given the COVID-19 pandemic, ensure that your aquatic fitness programming still complies with all local, state, tribal, territorial, and federal regulations; national safety guidelines; and YMCA of the USA (Y-USA) recommendations:

• **State laws and local regulations.** Because laws and regulations vary from state to state and sometimes even from city/county to city/county, be sure to obtain a current copy of your state and local codes. Ys are encouraged to return to programming in a way that meets or exceeds state and local requirements.

• **YMCA’s Child Protection and Aquatic Safety Membership Qualification** (which is included in Article II, Section 2 of the National Council Constitution) establishes minimum safety practices for YMCA in the areas of child abuse prevention and aquatic safety. All YMCA member associations are required to **annually confirm adherence to these safety practices to maintain member status as a YMCA:**
  - Comply with all applicable state and local aquatic safety codes and regulations. If such regulatory codes do not exist, comply with the CDC’s [Model Aquatic Health Code](https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/healthcare/index.html) and its supporting [Annex](https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/healthcare/annex.html).
  - Have a written aquatic safety plan (see Y-USA’s [aquatic safety plan template](https://www.ymca.net/aquatics/facility-maintenance/safety-planning), updated to include an infectious disease preparedness and response plan section) as outlined in [Aquatic Safety Guidelines for Ys](https://www.ymca.net/aquatics).
- Assure that lifeguards are certified, trained, tested, and deployed. Examples of these measures include the following:
  - **Certified and trained.** Certification training, ongoing in-service training
  - **Tested.** Preemployment testing, lifeguard quick checks, aquatic assessments, drills
  - **Deployed.** Rescue-ready lifeguards able to provide active supervision during all times a pool is in use

  - **Aquatic Safety Guidelines for Ys.** Follow the *Aquatic Safety Guidelines for Ys* when state and local law or regulation is absent, nonspecific, or at a lower standard than indicated in these guidelines. Ys located in jurisdictions that have minimal or no aquatic regulations for programming and staff are encouraged to refer to the *Aquatic Safety Guidelines for Ys* as well as the CDC’s [Model Aquatic Health Code](https://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/index.html).

**PROMOTE BEHAVIORS THAT PREVENT THE SPREAD**

As noted at the start of this document, for a more comprehensive understanding of all the policies and procedures to put in place to help prevent the spread, consult the following essential resources:

- **Your state and local regulatory agencies.** Consult with state and local officials to ensure your plans meet the unique needs and circumstances of your locality in a way that is feasible, practical, and acceptable.
- [Planning Ahead for Your Y: Aquatic Supplement](https://www.ymca.net/ymca/about/aquatics/aquatic-supplement-planning-ahead-for-your-y)
- [Aquatic Exercise Association's COVID-19 resources](https://www.aquaticexercise.org/coronavirus)

**MEET CAPACITY AND SOCIAL DISTANCING REQUIREMENTS**

Ensure that state and local regulations related to social distancing requirements are met during aquatic fitness programming, including maximum capacity for your aquatic facility and required spacing between individuals while in the aquatic environment. In addition to maximum capacity requirements for your facility, state and local regulations may also impact capacity within your programs. When determining maximum capacity in your programs, follow any direction state and local health authorities may be more stringent than the recommended ratios from Y-USA and the Aquatic Exercise Association.

Determine your pool and program capacity based on state and local social distancing requirements and your Y’s pool, pool deck, and locker room configurations. Limit class sizes or in-water capacity to allow those in the pool to maintain proper social distancing. Ensure that capacity calculations take into account required social distancing on the pool deck in the event of a...
safety situation where bathers need to exit the pool and remain on the pool deck or evacuate to another location.

Even if your state or local health authority makes accommodations for aquatic programming while social distancing requirements are still in place, seek to minimize contact between instructors and participants as well as close proximity of participants to each other as much as possible. Exceptions to social distancing requirements include the following:

- Anyone rescuing a distressed swimmer, providing first aid, or performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation, with or without an automated external defibrillator
- Individuals in the process of evacuating an aquatic venue or entire facility due to an emergency

MAINTAIN HEALTHY ENVIRONMENTS

As noted at the start of this document, for a more comprehensive understanding of all the policies and procedures to put in place to maintain a healthy environment, consult the following essential resources:

- **Your state and local regulatory agencies.** Consult with state and local officials to ensure your plans meet the unique needs and circumstances of your locality in a way that is feasible, practical, and acceptable.
- **CDC's Considerations for Public Pools, Hot Tubs, and Water Playgrounds During COVID-19**
- **Planning Ahead for Your Y: Aquatic Supplement**
- **Aquatic Exercise Association's COVID-19 resources**

CLEAN AND DISINFECT

Follow the cleaning and disinfecting intervals mandated by your state and local health authorities. At a minimum, plan to execute on cleaning and disinfecting protocols in the aquatic facility prior to the first aquatic fitness participant entering the water and after the last participant departs for the day and clean and then disinfect any shared equipment between users.

Provide adequate equipment for staff and participants to avoid or minimize sharing to the extent possible or limit use of equipment to one group of users at a time and clean and disinfect it between use by different groups. In particular, do not allow sharing of items that are difficult to clean and sanitize or disinfect, especially those that come into contact with the face (e.g., goggles, nose clips). Determine a plan for cleaning and disinfecting teaching equipment and any aquatic fitness equipment that is shared, which may include, but is not limited to, the following:
• Pool noodles
• Kickboards
• Float belts
• Balls
• Weighted equipment
• Drag equipment
• Rubberized equipment
• Stereo systems
• Microphone system
• Chair/stool

Contact vendors and manufacturers for guidance on appropriate cleaning and disinfecting procedures.

For additional detail on proper and safe cleaning and disinfecting protocols, including of shared equipment, if there is a suspected or confirmed case in your facility or program, see the CDC’s Considerations for Public Pools, Hot Tubs, and Water Playgrounds During COVID-19.

DOCUMENT POLICIES FOR A SUSPECTED OR POSITIVE CASE
Do not allow anyone, including supervisors or other staff, with a fever or other symptoms of COVID-19, who tested positive for COVID-19, or (excluding people who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months) who has been in close contact with persons with COVID-19 symptoms or known COVID-19 to participate in any classes. Develop inclusive and empathetic policies and procedures to implement in the event someone displays symptoms while in the facility or program or reports a positive case. (See the Interim Guidance for a Suspected or Positive COVID-19 Case for information to help guide you as you develop and document your Y’s policies.)

MANAGE INDIVIDUALS ENTERING AND EXITING THE AQUATIC FACILITY
Ask participants to arrive just prior to the class start time (approximately 5–10 minutes before). In addition, consider the following:

• **Limit aquatic facility use.** Consider limiting aquatic facility use to only staff, members, and program participants (no guests), perhaps only those that live in the local area.

• **Limit pool use.** Consider limiting the number of programs offered in the pool at one time.

• **Keep proper records.** Keep a proper record of all staff and participants in the facility at any time. Confirm contact information of anyone in the aquatic facility in the event they need to be notified because of a suspected or positive case of COVID-19.
• **Implement entry and traffic flow protocols.** Document, post, and frequently communicate protocols for entering and exiting the aquatic facility with the goal of minimizing contact and congregating and managing traffic flow. As participants enter and exit the facility consider the following:
  - Provide signage in the parking lot and entry areas outlining entry and exit procedures.
  - Position staff to open entry and exit doors to limit the contact participants have with facility surfaces.
  - Assign separate entry and exit points and establish a one-way flow of traffic within the facility.
  - Stagger program or class times and establish time limits in any open communal spaces to maximize numbers in key areas of the aquatic facility while maintaining capacity limits.

• **Participant preparedness.** Have participants arrive in swimsuits ready for class and exit the facility immediately after the class ends to reduce the number of persons in the changing areas at any given time.

• **Clearly and frequently communicate expectations.** Create and implement a strategy to communicate all that participants need to know in terms of facility entry, check-in procedures, safety measures, and other expectations.

• **Shift to contactless check-in.** Develop procedures for contactless check-in and paperless transactions.

**ESTABLISH PROTOCOLS FOR COMMUNAL SPACES**

Follow any state and local regulations for maintaining healthy environments in the viewing areas and locker rooms. In addition, consider the following potential modifications to those areas:

• **Modified layouts.** Change deck and other viewing area layouts to ensure that individuals can remain at least six feet apart from those they do not live within the standing and seating areas.

• **Physical barriers and guides.** Provide physical barriers or guides (e.g., chairs and tables) and visual cues (e.g., tape on the decks, floors, or sidewalks) and signs in communal spaces to ensure that staff and participants stay at least six feet apart from those they do not live with.

• **Staggered use.** Consider staggering use of communal spaces, if possible, and clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and any shared objects in them at least daily. Limit interaction of individuals in communal spaces as much as possible.

• **Designated seating.** Establish designated seating to assist in maintaining social distance in viewing areas.

  • **Sanitizing stations.** Consider installing sanitizing stations (both handwashing or hand sanitization stations and stations with sanitizing wipes) at the entrance and in key
locations throughout your aquatic facility where individuals are likely to come into contact with shared equipment or frequently touched surfaces. Ensure you have adequate supplies (soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, sanitizing wipes that are safe for participants to use, and no-touch trash cans) and that the alcohol concentration in any provided hand sanitizer follows CDC or state and local guidance.

- **No congregating.** Prohibit group gathering both in and out of the water if social distancing of at least six feet between people who do not live together cannot be maintained.

**SAFELY SET UP THE POOL AREA**
When setting up your pool area for aquatic fitness programs consider the following:

- Provide physical cues (e.g., cones on the pool deck) or guides in the water (e.g., lane lines) to ensure that staff and participants stay at least six feet apart from those they do not live with.
- Remove any nonessential pool equipment or shared items from the program area.
- Open doors, windows, bubbles, retractable roofs, etc., if it can be done safely, to increase outdoor air circulation. If your facility can shift to a more outdoor-like environment, do so.
- Maintain proper pool chemistry at all times.

**MAINTAIN HEALTHY OPERATIONS**
As noted at the start of this document, for a more comprehensive understanding of all the policies and procedures to put in place to maintain healthy operations, consult the following essential resources:

- **Your state and local regulatory agencies.** Consult with state and local officials to ensure your plans meet the unique needs and circumstances of your locality in a way that is feasible, practical, and acceptable.
- [Planning Ahead for Your Y: Aquatic Supplement](https://www.athletesintraining.com/planning-ahead-for-your-y-aquatic-supplement)
- [Aquatic Exercise Association's COVID-19 resources](https://www.aquaex.org/covid-19)

**DETERMINE PROGRAM DELIVERY AND SCHEDULING MODIFICATIONS**
As you look to resume programming to improve the quality of life of your participants, consider the following strategies for safely offering aquatic fitness programming:

- **Option 1:** Continue to offer a limited number of your existing aquatic fitness programs in the same formats but with a reduced or modified capacity and/or modified activities.
(see the “Modify Program Delivery or Format” section that follows).

- **Option 2:** Continue to offer a limited number of your existing programs in the same formats but with reduced or modified class timing (see “Adjust Time or Program and Staffing Schedules” section).

- **Option 3:** Create new class or program models to maximize the number of participants or their ability to participate on their own time (offer supplemental programs, etc.).

**Modify Program Delivery or Format**

Modifications to your current programs or class plans to meet social distancing and shared equipment requirements could include the following:

- **Have the instructor teach from the deck.** This model of instruction has been used for years and, according to the [Aquatic Exercise Association](https://www.aquaticx.org) (AEA), is the preferred teaching method for aquatic fitness programs in most situations. It is even more appropriate now as it can promote social distancing in the aquatic environment.

- **Use the whole pool for instruction.** When possible, use multi-depth formats that promote physical distance. This can include the following:
  - Use of multiple depths in one class, e.g., shallow, transitional, deep
  - Use of dual-depth classes, where some of the class is participating in the shallow end while others are in the deep end

To be effective, provide suitable programming options that work across the varying depths available in your aquatic facility.

- **Use stations or circuit training.** The stations or circuits can be instructor guided, where everyone in the class is performing each station at the same time; self-guided, with rotation from station to station; or a combination circuit in which some of the stations are instructor guided and others are self-guided. Be sure to enforce social distancing both at stations and as participants move from station to station, and avoid the sharing of equipment or, if equipment must be shared, clean it between uses.

- **Limit traveling patterns.** Use other methods to alter intensity and add creativity to programming.

- **Avoid exercises/activities at the pool wall.** Working at the wall generally brings participants into closer proximity. Avoid activities at the pool wall unless there is adequate wall space at the appropriate depth to social distance. This also applies to water breaks. Avoid a scheduled water break where everyone moves to the side of the pool simultaneously.

- **Cue and correct for spatial awareness.** Some activities and exercise choices make it more challenging for participants to remain in a designated space (e.g., movements performed without feet touching the pool bottom may cause participants to drift). Observe, cue, and correct for spacing to maintain social distance and adjust exercise choices as needed.
Consider equipment use. As mentioned above, avoid the sharing of equipment. Consider whether some inexpensive types of equipment (e.g., gloves, pool noodles, bands/loops/tubing) could be purchased by the participant (applying a lens of inclusion and equity to any policy put in place) or donated for participant use, and then disinfected by the participant after each class. When using Y equipment, limit the different types used in each class setting. Do not allow sharing of items that are difficult to clean and sanitize or disinfect.

- Avoid partner or team activities that require proximity, touching, or sharing equipment. Because social interaction is important, include activities that are designed with distancing in mind (e.g., a partner activity that maintains at least six feet of space in which partners take turns performing a high-intensity exercise for 30 seconds and a lower intensity exercise while offering encouragement and motivation to their partner).

Adjust Time or Program and Staffing Schedules
Here are a few of the ways you could change program schedules and class timing to maximize the number of participants:

- Extend the time or add new times that instructional activities utilize the pool or certain spaces in the pool. Opening the pool for extended hours for instruction (earlier and/or later than normal) allows you to offer opportunities to more participants and still provide adequate social distancing.

- Adjust each class time. Consider adjusting the amount of time for each class to accommodate smaller class sizes, maximize time and distance between participant groups when transferring in and out of class times, and allow adequate time for cleaning and disinfecting protocols. In addition, shortening class times may be necessary if your state or local health authorities have specific requirements around limiting the "load time of the virus" in the water.

- Provide class time for at-risk populations. When planning schedules, consider offering high-risk patrons, such as the elderly, specific times for pool and facility use when no other patrons are present.

- Implement rolling entry or start times with circuits or stations. Provide a circuit- or station-based class plan. Assign each participant or small, static group (cohort) a start time at 10-minute intervals and have stations set up for each segment of the class. Based on a predetermined schedule, each participant or cohort moves through each station where they participate in an exercise activity. This activity can be guided by an aquatic fitness instructor at each station or you can use self-directed learning with activity cards at stations monitored by an instructor overseeing the entire class.

- Incorporate class registration. Incorporate participant registration for aquatic fitness classes so you can monitor class size and try to keep consistent program cohorts together throughout the session and over multiple sessions. If possible, keep the same instructors with each cohort of participants, as applicable.
**New Class or Program Models**
Consider creating new class or program models to maximize the number of participants, which may include offering supplemental programs for when classes are not held. For example, set up an aquatic circuit that members can perform on their own.

**ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING AND LEADERSHIP CONSIDERATIONS**
Aquatic fitness instructors and Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program leaders can still follow the program guidelines outlined in the tools and resources from the [AEA Aquatic Fitness Professional Manual (7th Edition)](#) and the [AEA Arthritis Foundation Program Leader Resource Manual (1st Edition)](#), but may need to consider some interim modifications:

- **Safety and rescue skills.** Ensure instructors are updated and trained on the facility’s COVID-19 response plan, including, but not limited to, aquatic rescue and providing care in an aquatic environment.

- **Flotation belts in deep water.** Continue to encourage the use of life flotation belts designed for use during aquatic fitness when participants are in deep water.

- **Cueing.** Use effective cues to initiate action on the part of participants. Think about broadening your use of audio, visual, and tactile cueing as applicable, so participants do not miss important information. Teaching styles may need to be adjusted to adopt more of a coaching mindset in which instructors teach the move, coach for performance, and modify as needed.

- **Targets or guides to mark participant position.** Establish appropriate start and stop points for participants to maximize social distance. Consider using markers or guides/placeholders to organize participants prior to, during, and after the class. Provide visual guidance in the water to mark the location where each participant or cohort is to return to or stay as a “home base.”

- **Personal training and small-group training.** Consider offering more personal and small-group training options that focus on aquatic fitness exercise. Personal and small-group training allows for smaller groups, which can promote social distancing and address scheduling concerns related to multiple uses of the pool.

- **Movements for multi-depth classes.** Multi-depth programming can help accommodate more participants per class while maintaining social distancing. However, programming in different depths—shallow, transitional, deep—requires attention to exercise selection. For a multi-depth class, focus on moves that will work well at all depths and for individuals with and without flotation equipment, such as the lower body base moves in the list that follows.¹ Each of these lower body moves can be modified in all water depths using physical laws, tempo changes, and turns and travel (where appropriate), as well as the five variations for incorporating upper body movements:

  **Moves with Alternating Foot Pattern**
  - Narrow jog
  - Wide jog

¹ Each of these lower body moves can be modified in all water depths using physical laws, tempo changes, and turns and travel (where appropriate), as well as the five variations for incorporating upper body movements:
- Jog out, out, in, in
- Crossing jog
- Knee lifts
- Kicks
- Leg curls
- Ankle reach front
- Heel reach behind

**Moves with Double Foot Pattern**
- Jumping jacks / deep-water jacks
- Cross-country skis
- Moguls
- Front-back jumps / tuck front to back

**Moves with Repeated Single Foot Pattern**
- Knee swings
- Kick swings
- CanCan
- Repeaters for one-footed moves (performing multiple repetitions on one side before changing lead leg)

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1 Adapted from Table 8.1 “Variations of Shallow-Water Base Moves for the Lower Body” (page 144) and Table 9.1 “Variations of Deep-Water Base Moves for the Lower Body” (page 163) of the Aquatic Exercise Association (2018). *Aquatic fitness professional manual* (7th ed.). Human Kinetics.
DETERMINE PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION MODIFICATIONS

- **Update registration, make-up, refund, and cancellation policies.** Ensure you have developed and clearly communicated updated expectations to participants and staff related to registration, cancellation, make-ups, and refund policies and procedures.

- **Communicate clearly, frequently, and inclusively.** To minimize confusion and frustration, set expectations with staff and participants prior to and throughout any instructional programs:
  - Ensure you have procedures and policies for maintaining social distance during any in-person communication with participants. Seek to communicate virtually when possible.
  - Offer an electronic welcome back letter, welcome back video, virtual orientation session(s), etc., that outline the policies and procedures participants can expect when attending programs, including details around entering and exiting the facility for class.
  - Post signs about how to slow the spread of COVID-19, properly wash hands, promote everyday protective measures, use social distancing, and properly use a cloth mask in highly visible locations (for example, at deck entrances and at sinks):
    - [CDC’s How to Protect Yourself and Others signage](#)
    - [Y-USA’s Welcome Back Safety Signage](#)
    - [CDC’s Face Covering Do’s and Don’ts](#)
    - Follow the guidance of your state and local health authorities on appropriate signage that needs to be posted in your facility.
  - Let staff and participants know how to contact the designated staff member responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns and to whom they should report if they have symptoms of COVID-19, have a positive test for COVID-19, or (excluding those who have had COVID-19 within the past 3 months) were exposed to someone with COVID-19 within the previous 14 days.

CONSIDER MODIFICATIONS TO STAFFING

For more detail on helping to keep staff safe and healthy, consult the following essential resources:

- **Your state and local regulatory agencies.** Consult with state and local officials to ensure your plans meet the unique needs and circumstances of your locality in a way that is feasible, practical, and acceptable.

- [CDC's Considerations for Public Pools, Hot Tubs, and Water Playgrounds During COVID-19](#)

- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)’s Guidance on Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19](#)

- [Planning Ahead for Your Y: Aquatic Supplement](#)

- [Aquatic Exercise Association’s COVID-19 resources](#)

TRAIN STAFF

Train all staff on COVID-19 protocols and employee safe workplace practices prior to
reopening. At minimum, include the following:

- An overview of COVID-19
- An orientation to new policies; new procedures; and modifications to program delivery and scheduling as a result of social distancing and other pandemic-related requirements
- Practices for cleaning and disinfection
- Handwashing, use of cloth masks, and other preventive measures
- Staying home if ill and reporting illness

In addition, create an instructor development plan and calendar to meet your YMCA’s certification requirements. When appropriate, conduct staff training virtually. If in-person training is allowed by state and local health authorities, ensure that social distancing and other requirements are maintained.

CREATE STAFFING COHORTS
Plan employee schedules so that cohort groups work together, when practical, and so that members of one cohort do not work with another cohort. For example, Aaden, Javier, and Ann always work together; Hodan, Dawb, and Peter always work together. Scheduling in cohorts can help reduce exposure among staff. Consider scheduling instructor cohorts so that they do not interact with each other before, during, or after program time.

CLOSE OR LIMIT ACCESS TO STAFF AREAS
Close staff rooms or limit the number of employees in staff rooms at one time to maintain social distancing.

ENSURE INSTRUCTOR EQUIPMENT IS CLEANED AND DISINFECTED
Create a cleaning and disinfection schedule for all instructor equipment specific to aquatic fitness, e.g., microphones, mats, stools, etc.

ESTABLISH PROTOCOLS FOR STAFF ARRIVAL AND SCREENING
As a best practice, consider having staff arrive in their swimsuits ready for their shift and carry minimal personal belongings. In addition, consider screening staff (e.g., temperature screening or symptom checking) before each shift. Ensure safe, respectful, and empathetic implementation of screening protocols that aligns with any applicable privacy laws and regulations and counters potential bias, discrimination, and stigma. Arrange to safely transport staff who display symptoms or respond in the affirmative to health-related questions home or, depending on the severity of the symptoms, to a health care facility. (See the Interim Guidance for a Suspected or Positive COVID-19 Case for information on developing policies around what to do if staff display a temperature or other symptoms upon arrival.)

IMPLEMENT FLEXIBLE LEAVE POLICIES AND A BACK-UP STAFFING PLAN
Implement sick leave policies and practices for staff, cultivate a culture that encourages staff to stay home when they are sick, and develop return-to-work policies aligned with CDC’s criteria to end home isolation and that counter potential bias, discrimination, and stigma. In addition, be prepared to monitor absenteeism and create a roster of trained back-
INSTRUCTOR STANDARD PRECAUTIONS AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Have instructors follow state and local guidance, including as it relates to necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) for instruction in and out of the water (such as cloth masks or plastic face shields). Stress with staff that cloth masks (other than N95 devices for use by healthcare professionals) do not protect the wearer but reduce the potential of the wearer to spread the virus to others and help protect themselves. If teaching in the water, consider having instructors use swim goggles or cloth masks or plastic face shields while instructing to reduce the risk of virus transmission via the eyes. As a reminder, cloth masks should not be worn in the water, according to the CDC. A wet mask can make it difficult to breathe and may not work as well when wet.

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RESOURCES
CDC considerations for public pools, hot tubs, and water playgrounds during COVID-19

CDC recommendations for disinfecting your facility

CDC recommendations for confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 in households

CDC cleaning and disinfecting to slow spread of flu

CDC Cleaning and Disinfection After Persons Suspected/Confirmed to Have COVID-19 Have Been in the Facility