

General

- **Why make the transition now?**

The Canadian Red Cross decision was driven by regular assessments of each of our services that considers evolving humanitarian needs, the evolution of the marketplace and alignment with our strategic direction as defined in Vision 2025.

In the case of water safety training, the conclusion was that the relative humanitarian need has been surpassed by ever-rising demands in other areas, such as the pandemic, the opioid crisis and caregiving for seniors.

Training Partner Questions

- **Why did the Canadian Red Cross not notify Training Partners and certification holders earlier?**

The decision to transition swimming and water safety programming from the Canadian Red Cross to the Lifesaving Society was made at the governance level for both organizations in December 2021. The public announcement was scheduled as soon as possible in January following the holiday season.

- **What happens to Training Partner relationships?**

Most Canadian Red Cross Training Partner relationships will continue, as many Red Cross Training Partners offer more than Swimming & Water Safety programming in their community. While we are winding down on Swimming & Water Safety programming, there are other Red Cross programming offerings which will continue to be available for our customers to choose from. This includes the full line of Red Cross First Aid programs, as well as our Youth First Aid: Stay Safe! and Babysitting programs.

- **Which Canadian Red Cross Swimming & Water Safety programs will be retired at the end of 2022?**

The programs which will be retired at the end of 2022 are as follows:

- Red Cross Swim
- Water Safety Instructor and Water Safety Instructor Trainer
- Red Cross Lifeguard and Assistant Lifeguard
- Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard Instructor, Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor and Lifeguard Instructor Trainer

- **What if a Red Cross Training Partner does not want to offer the Lifesaving Society's Swim for Life program?**

We encourage Red Cross Training Partners to select the Lifesaving Society for their future swimming and lifeguarding programming, as we believe this transition is the best path forward to ensure Canadians' access to critical training.

The Lifesaving Society is a respected, accomplished organization that has long shared our passion to reduce drowning and aquatic-related injuries. We have every confidence the water safety training needs of Canadians will continue to be well-served in their care. Swim for Life is a well-recognized national program with a proven track record. Swim for Life leads seamlessly into the Lifesaving Society's lifesaving and lifeguard training programs – all of which are supported by a comprehensive leadership training system. Moreover, Lifesaving Society Canada lifeguard and leadership certifications are recognized in provincial/territorial jurisdictions across the country.

- **Are we doing anything to lessen the burden of change for Training Partners, instructors/trainers and lifeguards?**

Canadian Red Cross and the Lifesaving Society developed special pathways to support those transitioning from Canadian Red Cross to Lifesaving Society certifications. These pathways recognize and acknowledge the competencies earned in Red Cross certifications while providing the knowledge and resources critical for success as a Lifesaving Society instructor, lifeguard, or trainer. Any co-teach requirements associated with a Lifesaving Society certification during the transition period have been waived. Information on the complete transition of Red Cross certification holders is available at myrc.redcross.ca > News > Swim Transition.

Training Partners will be provided with support from Red Cross and the Lifesaving Society to make this transition which they will have a full year to complete. Red Cross Training Partner annual fees for Swimming & Water Safety are waived for 2022.

- **How many Training Partners, Instructors/trainers and Lifeguards will be affected?**

Red Cross Swimming & Water Safety programs are offered across Canada through over 1700 aquatic facilities, who employ 20,000 Red Cross certified Instructors, Instructor Trainers and Lifeguards. All will be supported through the course of 2022 to transition to the LSC programs.

- **I operate during the summer season only. When should I plan for my program transition?**

Seasonal Training Partners should look to transition before the 2022 season. Red Cross certification holders will be encouraged as of early March to start their transition to Lifesaving Society certifications.

While Red Cross Training Partners will be able to run Red Cross Swim throughout 2022, the Red Cross will not be signing any new Training Partner agreements for those looking to offer swimming & water safety programming in 2022.

- **What arrangement have the Canadian Red Cross and the Lifesaving Society made with respect to the Swim Transition?**

Canadian Red Cross and the Lifesaving Society have an agreement to support the transition of customers of Red Cross water safety programming to the swimming and lifeguard programs of the Lifesaving Society. The two organizations worked

collaboratively on transition pathways to facilitate this transition for both aquatic facilities and their staff. More on these pathways is available at myrc.redcross.ca > **News > Swim Transition.**

- **My facility would like to continue to offer Red Cross Swim beyond December 31, 2022. Is this an option?**

No. The Red Cross Swim program will be retired at the end of 2022.

- **My facility has Red Cross Swim Preschool mascots painted on a facility/building wall. What time frame do I have to remove these?**

The Red Cross is not requiring Training Partners to remove these mascots immediately or by the end of 2022. Facilities can choose to remove them when it makes sense for the facility to re-paint in the future.

- **Which Red Cross certifications are extended to December 31, 2022?**

- Water Safety Instructor and Water Safety Instructor Trainer
- Red Cross Lifeguard and Assistant Lifeguard if expiring during 2022
- Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard Instructor, Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor, and Lifeguard Instructor Trainer

Please note: Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard and Red Cross Lifeguard certifications remain valid through to their natural expiry date, if expiring in 2023 and beyond.

- **Should I schedule recertifications for Water Safety Instructors (WSIs) and other swimming and water safety certification holders in 2022?**

Red Cross certification holders who would have expired over the course of 2022 have all been extended to December 31, 2022. There is no need to schedule recertification courses.

Training Partners may run recertification courses or use the WSI - Professional Development online modules for in-service trainings if desired. These can be found at: **My Red Cross (myrc.redcross.ca) > My Profile > My Professional Development Courses.**

- **What is the impact of the Swim Transition on the Red Cross Indigenous Swim Program?**

Work with communities under the Indigenous Swim Program will continue across Canada as part of our Indigenous Peoples Framework. These programs offer more than just Red Cross Swim and include training in Youth First Aid, Psychological First Aid, and more. As of 2023, the swimming and water safety lessons provided as part of the program will use Lifesaving Society Swim for Life curriculum and Lifesaving Society Lifeguard certifications.

- **Will the scheduled 2022 price increase on Swimming and Water Safety Instructor Development Program materials still occur?**

Swimming and Water Safety Instructor Development Program material price increases and Training Partner fees have been waived for 2022. Scheduled First Aid pricing increases for 2022 will be applied as previously communicated.

Certification Holder Questions

- **Why did the Canadian Red Cross continue offering Water Safety Instructor Trainer (WSIT) Courses throughout 2021?**

The Canadian Red Cross offered programs to support the staffing needs of our Training Partners across Canada, as the decision to transition Canadian Red Cross swimming and water safety programming to the Lifesaving Society was not made until December 2021. The transition will occur over the course of 2022.

- **I hold an Assistant Lifeguard or Lifeguard certification which has an expiry date into 2023. When does my certification expire?**

Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard and Lifeguard certifications which expire after December 31, 2022, will expire on their natural expiry date and will remain a valid deck certification barring legislative changes. Those individuals will recertify according to the Lifesaving Society recertification pathway in 2023 and beyond. We would encourage these certification holders to also pursue the Lifesaving Society transition pathways in 2022 to expedite transition going forward. Individuals who wait to recertify until their natural expiry date (if after 2022) will be required to obtain their Lifesaving Society certification through Lifesaving Society's regular certification process.

- **What value is the certification I took with Red Cross in 2021, given the latest announcement that Red Cross is winding down their program, and I must transition to the Lifesaving Society certifications?**

Those who completed training in 2021 would have received valid certification which allows for their employment in aquatics. In addition to receiving certification, candidates received professional development, training resources, and in some cases training materials. Current Red Cross certification holders also have an easier transition pathway to Lifesaving Society's corresponding certifications.

- **I want a refund for training taken in 2021. I do not feel I received fair value for this training.**

Those who completed training in 2021 would have received valid certification which allows for their employment in aquatics during 2021 and 2022. In addition to receiving certification, candidates received professional development, training resources, and in some cases training materials. Current Red Cross certification holders also have an easier transition pathway to Lifesaving Society's corresponding certifications. There are no refunds for training taken in the past.

- **Are any expired Red Cross WSI certifications valid for the purposes of the Swim Transition pathways?**

The Canadian Red Cross and Lifesaving Society value aquatic facilities being able to have qualified staff for their programs. As has been identified over the course of the pandemic, staffing challenges have become a significant barrier to being able to reopen fully.

The following Red Cross certifications have been extended to expire on December 31, 2022, and are considered valid:

- Water Safety Instructor
 - All Water Safety Instructor certifications that expired between 2016 and 2022 have all been extended to December 31, 2022.
- Water Safety Instructor Trainer
- Red Cross Lifeguard and Assistant Lifeguard (if expiring in 2022)
- Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard Instructor
- Red Cross Lifeguard Instructor
- Lifeguard Instructor Trainer

Please note: Red Cross Assistant Lifeguard and Red Cross Lifeguard certifications remain valid through to their natural expiry date, if expiring in 2023.

FAQ – Lifesaving Society Canada

- **What programs will be available from the Lifesaving Society Canada with this transition?**

The Lifesaving Society Swim for Life program will be available Canada-wide in English and French. In addition to its National Lifeguard certification, the Lifesaving Society already offers a full suite of lifesaving and leadership training programs to its Affiliate Members across the country. Provincial/territorial Branches also offer a range of Water Smart public education initiatives and aquatic safety management services including, safety audits and management training – in addition to other Branch-specific services and courses.

- **What timeframe do facilities have to make this transition?**

In brief, facilities can make the transition at their convenience. We know this will take time and planning, and that training partners will have questions.

We anticipate that transition training for Red Cross certification holders will begin in March 2022.

To take advantage of the special arrangements related to the transition processes and costs, facilities (and aquatic staff) should plan to transition by December 31, 2022.

Summer-only program operators should contact the Lifesaving Society well in advance of the summer season.

- **What do I need to do now?**

For Red Cross training partners, instructors, lifeguards and trainers who wish to take advantage of this transition opportunity, please know that it is the intention of both organizations to make the transition as smooth as possible.

Individuals should check out the relevant transition pathway options posted on the Red Cross and Lifesaving Society Branch websites. Contact your Lifesaving Society Branch office to answer any questions.

The process for Red Cross Water Safety Training Partners who are already Affiliate Members of the Lifesaving Society may be slightly different than the transition process for those who are not yet affiliated. In both cases, a person-to-person conversation is the best way forward.

Let's talk – in person, on screen, or on the phone. Contact us at your convenience. We'll explore features and benefits of the Society's programs, answer your questions and explore your concerns. Together, we'll walk through the steps for a smooth and successful transition that works best for you.

Red Cross is referring its seasonal training partners to the Lifesaving Society for summer 2022 swim programming. If you wish to transition to the Lifesaving Society's programs for 2022, please contact the Lifesaving Society early in the year.