



# RETURN TO OPEN WATER SWIMMING GUIDELINES

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MAY 27th, 2021



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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Island Swimming acknowledges and thanks the following contributors to this document:

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Published guidelines from the following organizations were used to inform the content of this plan.

[Swim BC](#)

[Swimming Canada](#)

[viaSport](#)

[British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association \(BCRPA\)](#)

[Lifesaving BC](#)

[British Columbia Centre for Disease Control \(BCCDC\)](#)

All documents within were reviewed and approved by the ISC Board of Directors on June 26th, 2020.

# EMPLOYER PLAN

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## Facilities

### Working from home:

- Office Manager to continue working from home for the remainder of the summer and while school attendance is in shifts.
- Coaching staff will continue to work from home for admin duties & meetings will continue to be held virtually.

### Club Office:

- Only 1 staff member at a time in the PISE office. Staff members sharing office space will schedule office time to avoid more than 1 person in the office at any time.
- The club office will remain CLOSED to membership (*signage to be posted on PISE entrance doors*).
- All high-touch office surfaces to be cleaned after use including light switches, door knobs, desktops and computer keyboards. Lysol wipes will be left in the office for each user.
- Hand sanitizer and masks will be provided in the office for staff.

### Timing Booth Office:

- The timing booth will be closed at this time as Saanich may need the space for staff. Coaches will not need a “pool office” until competition resumes.

### Equipment Sales:

- Sales of equipment, swimsuits and clothing will be done online through the club website. Equipment will be ordered online then delivered, or left for safe pickup by the office manager or head coach.
- Returned clothing will be quarantined for 72 hours before being returned to stock.

## Open Water

- See the Open Water Swimming Plan for details.

## Dryland & Activation

- Dryland will continue to be virtual at this time.
- Activation will be limited in time, and will need to follow protocols for SCP and Westshore.

## Pools

- We will abide by all health and safety protocols implemented by Saanich Commonwealth Place and Juan de Fuca Recreation, including safe ingress and egress, lane density and practice procedures.

## Employee Exposure/Sick Days

- All employees must remain at home if exhibiting any signs of illness.
- Coaching shifts to be staggered so all staff are not at the pool at the same time, limiting potential exposure of all staff members.
- Early communication is required if coaches are unable to attend workout so another coach can cover, or practice can be cancelled in a timely fashion.
- Employees may take sick days without penalty or fear of dismissal.

# OPEN WATER PROTOCOL



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## INTRODUCTORY MINI CLINIC

<b>Date:</b>	TBD
<b>Location:</b>	Thetis Lake (Langford Lake or Elk Lake may also be used if needed)
<b>Session Length:</b>	30 minutes
<b>Group Size:</b>	16 swimmers
<b>Staff:</b>	1 coach per group, 1 supervising coach, 2 NLS certified lifeguards on duty

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### Introduction to location + Basic safety

- **Lake facilities, routes, and hazards** - Include a briefing on where the swimmers will be going, an outline on the contents of session, and general safety concerns of open water training (other lake users, debris in water, etc).
- **Physical distancing guidelines for open water sessions**- We expect swimmers to conduct themselves with respect to COVID-19 guidelines and maintain a safe training environment.
- **Communication during session** – Show swimmers and have them demonstrate the “Help” and “Ok” Signals used in open water settings
- **The basics of sighting** – Explain how sighting is used to maintain a proper line while swimming in open water. Provide a visual demonstration with explanation.
- **Developing a Panic Plan** – Explain to swimmers what to do in the case of emergency (Stop, relax head back, tread water in safety position on back, breathe deeply, signal to coach or safety person using practiced signals).

### Water Safety Skills

- **Conduct a water treading assessment**- Close to shore, have swimmers perform a timed 5-minute water treading evaluation to ensure safety once moving into open water (Check with swimmers’ comfort regarding water temp)
- **Conduct a stationary floating practice** – Have swimmers relax and remain stationary while floating on their back and front, with relaxed breathing.
- **Practice sighting** – Use a small route to have swimmers practice sighting and develop comfort with maintaining lines in open water.
- **Practice open water skills**- Have swimmers practice transitioning between swimming, treading water, and floating before progressing session.

# OPEN WATER PROTOCOL

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## Required Safety Equipment for Mini Clinic, and all Open Water sessions:

- 2 Water Vessels:
  - One coach on the water; one on the beach
  - One to Two lifeguards on the water
  - Kayaks, Paddle boards for each person on the water
- Basic first aid kit (remains on beach with second BLS certified medical personnel)
- Emergency first aid kit (essential emergency items to remain on water in kayak)
- Fanny pack with gloves, pocket mask and eye shield (to remain on lifeguard)
- 1 Rescue buoy or tube for each lifeguard
- Reaching pole
- Fox 40 Whistle
  - Coaches - ISC to provide
  - Lifeguards - provide own
- Cell phone with lead coach in kayak
- One Emergency Set of fins and snorkel gear (to be available on lead kayak with safety gear)
- Air and Water Thermometer
- Swim Buoy - recommended for all participating swimmers

# OPEN WATER PROTOCOL



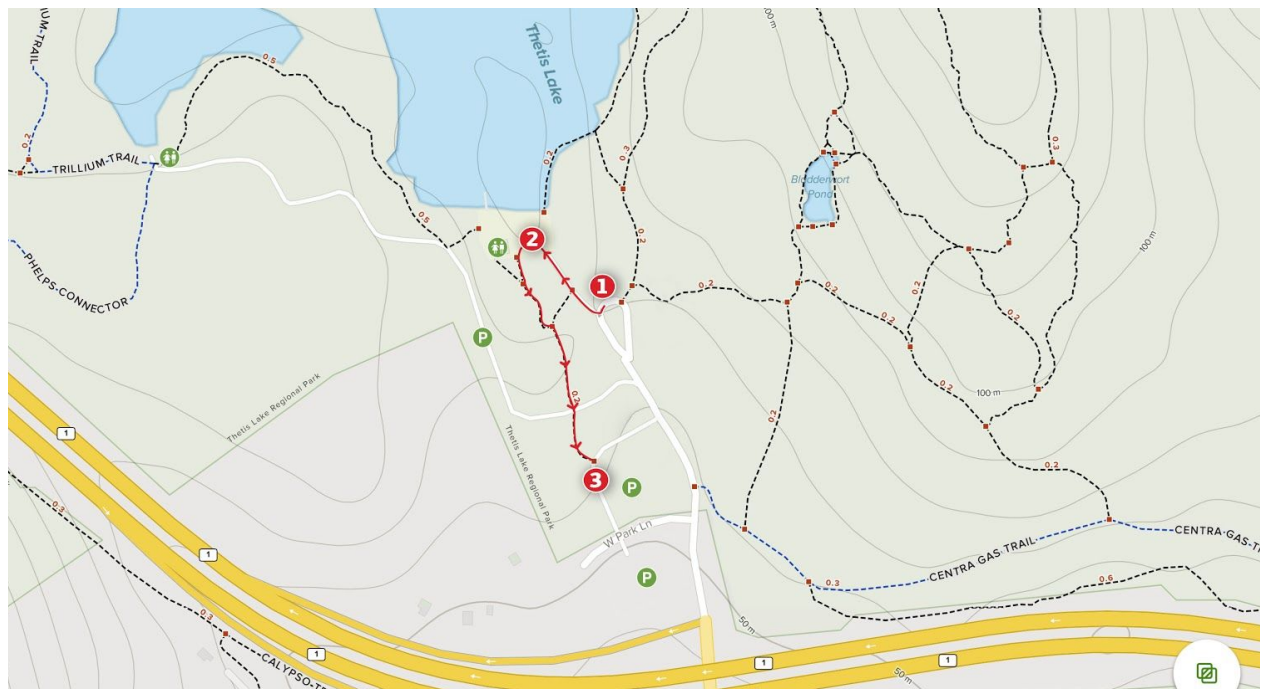
## OPEN WATER SESSIONS - GENERAL GUIDELINES

### Participating swimmers meet the following criteria:

- Have signed an *Acknowledgment and Assumption of Risk Form* that Swim BC has on file, and a confirmation email has been forwarded to ISC.
- Have previously participated in a sanctioned Open Water competition (ex: BC Open Water Championships or Canadian Junior Championships Open Water event) or have completed the ISC Open Water Swim Clinic.
- Are 11 years or older, and in Blue group or higher.
- Are able to complete an 800m pool swim in under 12:30 or a 1500m pool swim in under 24:00, based on coach's judgement.
- Are not currently ill, showing any signs of illness, have not shown any COVID-19 related symptoms for over 14 days, nor have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.

### Drop off and Pick Up

- Swimmers will be dropped off at the upper roundabout at Thetis lake, 10 minutes before the session start time. (#1)
- Swimmers will walk to the beach front where they will meet their coach. (#2)
- Swimmers will exit the water by the changeroom, and walk down the path to be picked up at the main parking lot, to avoid contact with swimmers arriving for the next session. (#3)
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged not to remain on the beach during sessions, and to respect physical distancing guidelines.



# OPEN WATER PROTOCOL

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## **Athlete Protocol**

- Swimmers should stay 3m apart from each other at all times on the beach. Coaches will provide markers on the beach where swimmers should stand.
- Swimmers should arrive at the beach prepared to swim with their swim suit or wet suit already on.
- Swimmers must wear the provided green swim cap, to maximize group visibility.
- Swimmers are encouraged to swim with a brightly colored buoy.
- Athletes are expected to conduct themselves with respect to COVID-19 safety guidelines as well as the safety guidelines outlined by the lifeguard on duty.

## **Pre-Swim Activation**

- The coach will lead the swimmers through a short activation while respecting the 2m distance between athletes and other beach patrons.
- The lifeguard will give a brief talk on safety protocol.
- The coach will explain the plan for the swim session, including the swim route.

## **Swim Session**

- The coach will direct swimmers to enter the water two at a time while remaining 3m apart from one another.
- The coach will direct swimmers to enter the water when the pair of swimmers ahead of them is approximately 15m ahead.
- Once all swimmers have entered the water the coach will paddle to a position where they can easily maintain sight of all swimmers.
- The coach will remain in positions where they can maintain sight of the swimmers as well as remain visible to the swimmers.
- Two lifeguards will be on duty at all times. At least one lifeguard will monitor the swimmers from a boat (kayak, paddleboard) on the water.



# OPEN WATER PROTOCOL



## SESSION CHECKLIST

Session Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Yes (indicate with ✓)	Initials
<b>Pre-Practice Checklist for lifeguards</b>		
Equipment present, and in working order		
Printed manual available		
Additional requirements, as determined by Head lifeguard		
<b>Coach(s) Pre-Practice Checklist</b>		
Make sure all of the following is satisfied before beginning session:		
*Note: The Supervising coach will have the final say on cancelling the session		
Is a printed manual available		
Are conditions suitable for swimming		
Air temperature (Air + water = 30 - 63°C)		
Water temperature (between 18 - 30°C)		
Water quality (e.g., no algae blooms; bacterial count within VIHA Guidelines)		
Wind velocity		
No threat or active thunder/lightning		
Crowds		
Coach has surveyed swim course prior to session starting, and it is clear		
Watercraft is in working condition		
Coach(s) has completed a wellness questionnaire		
Attendance recorded for all participating swimmers		
<b>Coaches will ensure all swimmers:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Have completed a wellness questionnaire</li> <li>○ Understand the venue and potential hazards they may encounter.</li> <li>○ Can demonstrate appropriate responses to hazards</li> <li>○ Are aware of, and will abide by physical distancing measures</li> <li>○ Demonstrate water safety skills to desired extent, with confidence</li> <li>○ Have worked on sighting and are comfortable using it in open water</li> <li>○ Feel safe and want to participate in an open water training session</li> </ul>		
<b>Coach(s) Post-Practice Checklist</b>		
Make sure all of the following is satisfied at the conclusion of the session:		
All swimmers have exited the water		
All equipment has been checked in		
Site is in same order as arrival		



# WELLNESS QUESTIONNAIRE

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

As a participant in a group activity I have a responsibility to report if I am not feeling well. I understand that if I have any of the following symptoms, I should report it to my coach and not participate in swimming activities until I have been assessed by a healthcare professional.

- **KEY SYMPTOMS OF COVID19:**
- **Fever**
- **Chills**
- **Cough or worsening of chronic cough**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Loss of sense of smell or taste**
- **Diarrhea**
- **Nausea and vomiting**

If you have any of these symptoms it is recommended that you call 811 and arrange for COVID19 testing. Your initial contact with a medical office should be by phone, PLEASE DO NOT walk into a health care provider with any of these symptoms. You should also self isolate at home for 10 days and should not return to activity until you are symptom free.

# EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN FOR OPEN WATER



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**Thetis Lake Regional Park**  
**Six Mile Rd/W Park Ln**  
**Victoria, BC**

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## Emergency Personnel

- **Charge Person(s)** – Responsible for immediate care of the swimmer & assesses injury severity.

**Supervising Coach**  
TBD

**Primary Lifeguard**  
TBD

- **Second Charge** – Responsible for alerting lifeguard(s) & assisting the charge person in care of the athlete.

**Additional Coaches**  
TBD

**Secondary Lifeguards**  
TBD

- **Call Person** – Responsible for activating EMS services, meeting them at the main parking lot (by the parking meter) & ensuring ambulance access route is clear (to be designated by primary lifeguard).
- **Crowd Control** – Responsible for maintaining spectator control and assisting charge/second if needed (to be designated by primary lifeguard).

## Emergency Communication

- Activate EMS (911) via cell phone by the call person
- Provide the following information:
  - Name, address, telephone number of caller (your phone #)
  - Number of athletes (involved in incident)
  - Condition of athlete(s)
  - First aid treatment initiated by first responder
  - Relay specific directions to the charge person & the injured person
  - Other information as requested by dispatcher

# EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN FOR OPEN WATER



## Emergency Equipment (on main beach & lifeguards)

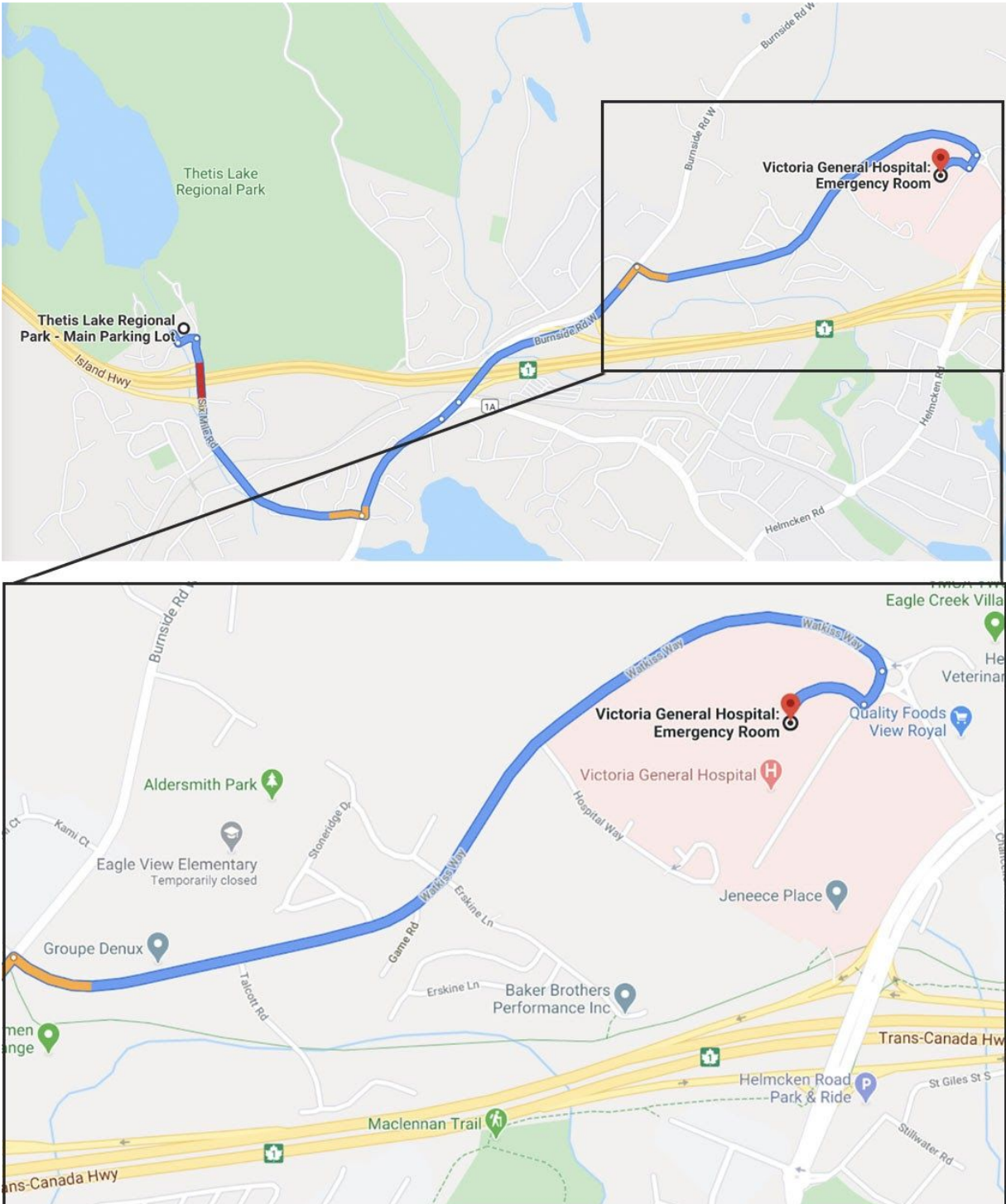
- Blanket
- Ice Pack
- Wound Care Supplies/First Aid kit
- 2 Water Vessels:
  - Kayaks, Paddle boards for each person on the water
- Fanny pack with gloves, pocket mask and eye shield (to remain on lifeguard)
- 1 Rescue buoy or tube for each lifeguard
- Reaching pole
- Fox 40 Whistle - one for each coach/lifeguard
- Cell phone with lead coach in kayak
- One Emergency Set of fins and snorkel gear (to be available on lead kayak with safety gear)
- Air and Water Thermometer

## Emergency Protocol

- Immediate care of injured/ill athlete
- Depending on severity, all swimmers clear water
- Signal for lifeguard using one arm in the air (emergency kit is brought with lifeguard).
- Activate EMS if required (lifeguard will make decision)
  - Signal to call person (other lifeguard or coach)
  - Call person (lifeguard or coach) dials 911 with information outlined above
- Crowd person controls crowd situation (swimmers, parents, spectators, etc)
- Call person meets ambulance at designated area

<b>Nearest Hospital</b>	<b>Victoria General Hospital</b> 1 Hospital Way, Victoria, BC, V8Z 6R5
<b>Nearest Walk -In Clinics</b>	<b>Eagle Creek Medical Clinic</b> 29 Helmcken Rd, Victoria, BC V8Z 5G7
	<b>Wheelhouse Integrative Medical Clinic</b> #107-2349 Millstream Road 250-391-7554
	<b>Westshore Urgent Primary Care Clinic</b> 582 Goldstream Ave 250-519-6919
<b>Nearest Pharmacies</b>	<b>I.D.A - Forbes Pharmacy</b> 27 Helmcken Rd #120, Victoria, BC V8Z 5G5
	<b>Island Pharmacy</b> 284 Helmcken Rd #106, Victoria, BC V9B 1T2
	<b>Rexall</b> 1880 Island Hwy #102, Victoria, BC V9B 1J2

# EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN FOR OPEN WATER



# CLUB ILLNESS POLICY



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In this policy “member” includes an employee, volunteer, participant or parent/ spectator.

1. **Inform an individual in a position of authority (coach, team manager) immediately if, you feel any symptoms of COVID-19** such as fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, loss of sense of smell or taste, headache, fatigue, diarrhea, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, muscle aches
2. **Assessment:**
  - a. Members must respond to a pre-training oral questionnaire before their practice/ activity to attest that they are not feeling any of the COVID 19 symptoms.
  - b. Coaches will visually monitor team members to assess any early warning signs as to the status of their health and to touch base on how they are regarding their personal safety throughout the practice/ activity.
  - c. If members are unsure, please have them use [the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) BC Support App self-assessment tool.
3. **If a member is feeling sick with COVID-19 symptoms:**
  - a. They should remain at home and contact Health Link BC at 8-1-1.
  - b. If they feel sick and/or are showing symptoms while at practice they should be sent home immediately and have them contact 8-1-1 or a doctor for further guidance.
  - c. NO member may participate in a practice/activity if they are symptomatic.
4. **If a member tests positive for COVID-19:**
  - a. The member will not be permitted to return to practice until they are free of the COVID-19 virus.
  - b. Any member who worked / practiced closely with the infected member will also be removed from club activity for at least 14 days.
  - c. Ensure work / practice area is closed off, cleaned and disinfected immediately and any surfaces that could have potentially be infected/ touched.
5. **If a member has been tested and is waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test:**
  - a. As with the confirmed case, the member must be removed from the work / practice area.
  - b. The BCCDC advises that any person who has even mild symptoms to stay home and call 8-1-1.
6. **If a member has come in to contact with someone who is confirmed to have COVID-19:**
  - a. Members must advise their employer/ coach if they reasonably believe they have been exposed to COVID-19.
  - b. Once the contact is confirmed, the member will be removed from the workplace/ practice for at least 14 days or as otherwise directed by public health authorities. Members who may have come into close contact with the member will also be removed from the workplace for at least 14 days.
  - c. The workspace/ activity area will be closed off, cleaned, and disinfected immediately and any other surfaces that could have potentially been infected/touched.
7. **Quarantine or Self-Isolate conditions:**
  - a. Any member has travelled outside of Canada or the province within the last 14 days is not permitted to enter any part of the facility and must quarantine and self-isolate.
  - b. Any member with any symptoms of COVID-19 is not permitted to enter any part of the facility and must quarantine and self-isolate.
  - c. Any member from a household with someone showing symptoms of COVID-19 is not permitted to enter any part of the facility and must quarantine and self-isolate.
  - d. Any member who is quarantined or self-isolating as a result of contact with an infected person or in families who are self-isolating, is not permitted to enter any part of the facility.

# OUTBREAK PLAN



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## Roles and Responsibilities:

- **Director of Swimming:** Communicates with Facility administration and ISC Safety Advisors when a potential outbreak is identified. Has authority to modify, restrict, postpone or cancel activities when indicated.
- **ISC Coaching Staff:** Informs Director of Swimming if a swimmer reports symptoms of COVID-19.
- **ISC Safety Advisors:** Stays abreast of news related to COVID-19, new government regulations, Swim BC bulletins; assists in development of the ISC Return to Swimming plan, and provides education and enforcement as indicated.

## Actions:

- In the event that any swimmer or coaching staff member reports they are suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19, the Director of Swimming will immediately notify facility administration and the ISC Safety Advisors
- If a club member, coach, or family member/household occupant contracts COVID-19 symptoms, the Director of Swimming, in communication with the ISC Safety Advisors, will implement the ***Island Swimming Club Illness Policy*** and advise individuals to<sup>1</sup>:
  - Use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine if further assessment or testing is needed;
  - Self-isolate;
  - Monitor symptoms daily, report respiratory illness and not return to activity for at least 10 days following the onset of COVID-19 symptoms;
  - Return to swimming / work if the individual or family member/household occupant is tested for COVID-19 and is negative;
  - Return to swimming / work if the individual or family member/household occupant is not tested, and 14 days have passed since they became ill and they are symptom free.
- In the event any swimmer or coach has had to leave a practice, as a result of COVID-19 symptoms, the Director of Swimming will notify the facility administration and ISC Safety Advisors immediately to permit proper facility cleaning protocols to be followed.
- In the event any swimmer or coach has a positive COVID-19 result, the Director of Swimming and/or the ISC Safety Advisors will immediately report and discuss the suspected outbreak with the Island Health Medical Health Officer (or delegate).
- Should a medical health officer contact ISC, the Director of Swimming and/or the ISC Safety Advisors will cooperate in the contact tracing, including ensuring attendance sheets are available.

<sup>1</sup> Non-medical information about COVID-19 is available 7:30am-8pm, 7 days a week at 1-888-COVID19 (1-888-268-4319). The [BC Centre for Disease Control \(BCCDC\)](#) is the source of truth for province-wide information, including symptoms of COVID-19 and [current COVID-19 case counts](#).

# OPEN WATER TRAINING CHECKLIST



*To be kept on file by Club with all waivers.*

Question		Yes	Notes
1	<b>Coach Experience</b> One coach on the water with attendance at OW provincial and/or Canadian Juniors or above		
2	<b>Swimmer Experience</b> Min. 11 years old, Cohort 2 or higher participation in OW event at provincial level and/or Canadian Juniors or above, or have completed open water safety clinic.		
3	<b>Safety Person</b> Two NLS certified lifeguards, comfortable kayaker/paddle boarder, at least one on water, maximum ratio of 1:10 to number of swimmers		
4	<b>Insurance</b> Confirmation ISC has adequate insurance coverage for open water swimming Confirmation lifeguards have adequate insurance coverage		
5	<b>Permit</b> Determine if CRD permit is required		
6	<b>Site Review</b> Completed with all specifics documented		
7	<b>Route</b> Viewable with safety person		
8	<b>Emergency Action Plan</b> Completed and documented		
9	<b>Outbreak Plan</b> Completed and documented		
10	<b>Club Illness Policy</b> Completed and documented		
11	<b>Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks form</b> Completed and on file for all participants		
12	<b>Board Review</b> Completed, documented and on file, provincial requirements met		

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

Club President: \_\_\_\_\_ Head Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_