

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Bureau of Pool & Waterfront Safety

RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATIONS

CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR) CERTIFICATION

Massachusetts law requires all lifeguards employed by the Commonwealth or its political subdivisions to maintain annual certification in **CPR Basic Life Support for Professional Rescuers**. (See [Mass. Gen. Laws, Title XVI, Chapter 111, Section 201](#)). While many training agencies offer a two-year certification, the annual recertification requirement established by Massachusetts law requires that the Department of Conservation and Recreation only recognizes CPR certification as valid during the first year of issuance.

Training Formats: DCR recognizes **Classroom-based** (in-person) training and **Blended Training** (online with an in-person skills verification by a qualified instructor) formats as acceptable CPR training formats. ***Online courses without an in-person skills assessment are not recognized.***

Regarding advanced training certifications:

- ACLS (Advanced Cardiac Life Support) Healthcare Provider certification, also referred to as Advanced Life Support (ALS), is **not accepted** as meeting the BLS certification requirements as the ACLS course does not require pediatric (Adult/Child) skill assessments. Applicants with ACLS certification would also need BLS certification to be eligible for employment.
- Persons holding certification in **both** ACLS and PALS (Pediatric Advanced Life Support) would meet the CPR Basic Life Support certification requirements provided the certification is in its first year of issuance. Together ACLS and PALS cover Adult and Pediatric basic life support skill evolutions in addition to advanced care options.

RECOGNIZED CARDIOPULMONARY RESUSCITATION (CPR) CERTIFICATIONS	
American Red Cross	https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/digital-certificate <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuers r.24• BLS for Healthcare Providers
American Heart Association	https://ecards.heart.org/student/myecards <ul style="list-style-type: none">• BLS for Healthcare Providers<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ BLS Instructor-Led Training (100% Classroom)◦ HeartCode® BLS (Blended Training)
American Safety and Health Institute / Medic First Aid (HSI)*	<small>*Remote Skills Verification (RSV) NOT accepted</small> https://hsi.com/solutions/cpr-aed-first-aid-training/quality-assurance/student-card-validation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• BLS for Healthcare Professionals• CPR Pro for the Professional Rescuer
Emergency Care and Safety Institute / American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons	https://signup.ecsinstitute.org/EdCenter/StudentCertificateLookup.aspx <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic Life Support (BLS) for the Healthcare Provider
National Safety Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic Life Support for Healthcare and Professional Rescuers• BLS for Healthcare Providers

FIRST AID CERTIFICATION

Lifeguards employed by the Commonwealth must maintain current first aid certification throughout the course of their employment. In most cases, first aid certification runs concurrently with the lifeguarding certification.

First aid certifications should be compliant with the 2024 American Red Cross and American Heart Association First Aid Guidelines. Courses developed prior to 2024 must include updates consistent with the [2024 Guidelines](#). Additionally, courses must include both a written exam and in-person skill assessment.

Training Formats: DCR recognizes **Classroom-based** (in-person) training and **Blended Training** (online with an in-person skills verification by a qualified instructor) formats as acceptable first aid training formats. **Online courses without an in-person skills assessment are not recognized.**

RECOGNIZED FIRST AID CERTIFICATIONS	
American Red Cross	https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/digital-certificate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Aid• Adult and Pediatric First Aid• Emergency Medical Response• Responding to Emergencies
American Heart Association	https://ecards.heart.org/student/myecards
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Heartsaver® First Aid• Heartsaver® First Aid/CPR/AED
American Safety and Health Institute / Medic First Aid (HSI)*	https://hsi.com/solutions/cpr-aed-first-aid-training/quality-assurance/student-card-validation
	*Remote Skills Verification (RSV) NOT accepted
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult First Aid• Basic First Aid• Emergency Medical Response• Wilderness First Aid
Emergency Care and Safety Institute / American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons	https://signup.ecsinstitute.org/EdCenter/StudentCertificateLookup.aspx
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Aid• Wilderness First Aid• Advanced First Aid• Emergency Medical Responder
National Safety Council	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• First Aid• Advanced First Aid
National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NREMT (All levels)

LIFEGUARDING CERTIFICATION

Lifeguards employed by the Commonwealth must maintain a valid lifeguarding certification throughout the course of their employment. Additionally, lifeguards assigned to a waterfront area (inland or coastal) must also possess Waterfront Skills certification.

Training Formats: DCR recognizes **Classroom-based** (in-person) training and **Blended Training** (online with a required in-person skills verification by a qualified instructor) formats as acceptable lifeguard training formats. ***Online courses without an in-person skills assessment are not recognized. Remote (online) skills assessments done with in real time with a live instructor are not accepted.***

RECOGNIZED LIFEGUARDING CERTIFICATIONS	
American Red Cross	Two-Year Certificate Validity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lifeguarding (Including Deep Water) r.24• Waterfront Skills Module• Note: Shallow Water Lifeguarding certification may be accepted for Wading Pool lifeguards only.	
Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA)	Two-Year Certificate Validity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lifeguarding v6 (Pool and Waterfront)• Lifeguarding v7 (Pool)• Lifeguarding v7 with Waterfront and Waterpark Skills (Pool and Waterfront)	
StarGuard Elite (SGE)	One-Year Certificate Validity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SGE StarGuard Lifeguard<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Competency Assessment & Performance Record (CAPR) will indicate additional certification in ASHI First Aid, ASHI BLS CPR for Professional Rescuer, ASHI Bloodborne Pathogens, and ASHI Emergency Oxygen◦ CAPR will indicate the depth at which the student demonstrated competency.◦ CAPR will indicate any “additional options” included with the certification such as “Open Water” (Waterfront Skills)	
Ellis and Associates (E&A)	One-Year Certificate Validity
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• International Lifeguarding Training Program (ILTP®) – Certification. <p>Licenses specific to a particular facility are not accepted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Certifications may come from E&A Ellis Education Services◦ Lifeguarding certifications should indicate the depth at which the student demonstrated competency.◦ Certifications should also list other options included in training, e.g. “Special Facilities: Open Water”	

QUALIFIED POOL OPERATOR CERTIFICATION

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts requires public pools to be under the supervision of a person certified in the safe and effective operation and maintenance of swimming pools. (See 105 CMR 435.17).

The Department of Conservation and Recreation requires all Pool Managers and Assistant Pool Managers to maintain current certification in swimming pool operations.

Training Formats: MA DPH only recognizes **Classroom-based** (in-person) training for newly certified operators. Persons eligible to RENEW/RECERTIFY are eligible for **Blended Training** (online with an in-person session and exam by a qualified instructor) provided they submit proof of previous 16-hour classroom-based training. ***Fully online courses without an in-person session are not recognized by MA DPH.***

RECOGNIZED POOL OPERATOR CERTIFICATIONS	
DeRosa Aquatic Consulting	
• Practical Pool Management PLUS (PPM+)	• Practical Pool Management (<i>Re-certification only</i>)
National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)	
• Aquatic Facility Operator	
Pool and Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA)	
• Certified Pool & Spa Operator Course	○ Classroom Format: Valid for Original Certification and Recertification
	○ Blended Format “CPO Fusion” Course: <i>Valid only for Recertification Only</i>