

MIDDLETOWN RECREATION DIVISION 2023 AQUATIC STAFF MANUAL



Dear Aquatic Staff:

To our new staff, we welcome you to the Middletown Recreation.

To our returning staff: it's nice to have you return for another summer.

We look forward to another fun, safe summer of programs for our residents. You have been hired for your knowledge and ability to provide the residents of Middletown with quality recreational services. Whatever your responsibilities are within the Recreation Division, your job is important as we work together to strengthen our community. We know you all will perform your duties to the best of your ability.

This manual has been prepared by the Recreation Administration Staff as a guide to help you know and understand your duties and responsibilities. Every effort has been made to adopt policies and procedures that will provide maximum safety for you and the public.

If you feel a policy change is needed, you should approach your immediate supervisor. However, until your immediate supervisor has notified you that the policy has been officially changed, you must abide by the policies herein. Questions on information in this manual should be addressed to the appropriate Recreation Supervisor. As circumstances and operating conditions change, the City reserves the right to change, amend or abolish any of the manual's provisions at its sole discretion with or without prior notice.

Questions on information not covered in this manual should be addressed to Nick Dionne, Aquatics Supervisor.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer experience.

Cordially,

Recreation Administrative Staff

MIDDLETOWN RECREATION MISSION STATEMENT

The Recreation & Community Services Department will enhance the quality of life for all Middletown residents with regard to recreational, athletic, leisure, and senior services. Through community partnerships, long-range planning, and professional management, the Department is committed to the highest level of equitable service, integrity, safety, and fiscal management. The Department will enhance the dignity of seniors while supporting their wellness, independence, and encouraging their community involvement.

Staff and volunteers will portray positive behaviors and be a positive role model for our participants by maintaining an attitude of respect, patience, courtesy, and maturity. You are expected to act in a caring, honest, respectful, and responsible manner consistent with the Mission of the Recreation Division.

DIVERSITY

Diversity is a concept by which value is placed on the difference of the people who make up our workforce. These differences include both primary dimensions (e.g. race, gender, age, religious creed, marital status, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, etc.), and secondary dimensions (e.g. geographic location, socioeconomic conditions, work background, etc.), which are characteristics of groups of people within an organization.

As our workforce becomes more diverse, we are both challenged by and have the opportunity to find ways of enabling people of many different backgrounds to provide valuable contributions to the City of Middletown. It is not enough to simply increase diversity in the workplace; we must learn to respect and appreciate people from diverse backgrounds. When individuals communicate and work effectively with each other, affirmative action and the diversity within our workforce will mutually support an equal opportunity environment.

WORK SCHEDULE

- For the safety of the public, the Department must discourage time off, tardiness, and unexcused absences. If you feel time off is unavoidable, you may request approval by submitting a Substitute Request Form to your immediate supervisor. Approvals will be based on the operating requirements of the Department. Employees are responsible for finding their own replacements. Replacements must be approved by the Aquatic Supervisor.
- During the summer, no extended vacation requests will be approved. Time off is limited.
- All employees must report to work in accordance with their scheduled hours. If you are ill and cannot work, notify the Aquatic Supervisor by calling the Recreation Department Office between 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, at 860-638-4500 Monday through Friday. We prefer that you email us rec@middletownct.gov. If you cannot reach anyone in the office please notify the Aquatic Supervisor on the cell phone at (860) 883-3887. Do NOT just leave a message if you cannot reach anyone. Make sure you speak to someone on the phone. Please do NOT send text messages.
- On **weekends and holidays**, call the Aquatic Supervisor cell phone (860) 883-3887 and call the facility you are assigned to as soon as it opens, and notify the Facility Manager. If the Facility is short staffed, the Aquatic Supervisor will be notified.
- Employees must report to work on time, be working when their schedule begins, and be in appropriate attire (See Work Attire pg.3). Before leaving their facility, employees should notify, and receive

permission from the Facility Manager (e.g. end of scheduled workday, emergencies, swim lessons, etc.). You are required to give your immediate supervisor twenty-four hours' notice for permission to leave early or report late (i.e. doctor appointment, college registration, etc.).

- Staff employees may not have visitors during working hours.

STAFF WEEKLY PAYROLL SHEET/TIMECARDS

- Weekly payroll sheets will be filled in upon arrival and departure. Each staff person is responsible to fill in **only their own times**.
- Time card verification (signature) is the responsibility of each employee. You must check to see if your hours match the Weekly Payroll Sheet. The form includes instructions for use.
- **Employees have specific budgeted hours. They may not exceed those hours without the permission of the Aquatic Supervisor.** Ask your Supervisor for your budgeted hours.
- Seasonal/Part Time Staff are only paid for the actual hours they have worked. If any recreation program is cancelled, Seasonal/Part Time staff will not be paid for those scheduled hours. Potential cancellations may include, but are not limited to, low enrollment, inclement weather, or power outages.

WORK ATTIRE

For the health and safety of our employees, we require the following:

- All employees must wear sneakers or flat soled shoes at all times when walking to and from their swim facilities.
- The wearing of jewelry and additional clothing that may be detrimental to the wearer while on duty, or during emergency rescue, is prohibited. The Aquatic Supervisor will determine what is acceptable.
- **Hip packs must be worn at all times, while on duty.**
- Lifeguards must wear sunglasses and/or Lifeguard hats if they are sensitive to the sun's effects and/or experience problems with seeing swimmers through the sun's glare. Sunglasses will be the responsibility of the employees. Lifeguard hats will be provided.
- Lifeguards must protect their skin against the harmful effects of the sun by using hats, tee shirts, and sunscreen. Additionally, lifeguards with sensitive skin should notify the Aquatic Supervisor, if additional protection is required. Umbrellas should be up unless wind prevents their use.
- Lifeguard staff shirts, hats, and bathing suits are provided for easy identification by the public, (i.e. emergencies, information requests, questions, etc.) and are the only attire permitted during your scheduled hours of work. Bathing suits must be worn during your hours of work.
- Pool attendants are required to wear their staff shirts at all times during their scheduled work hours.
- **No other attire, with the exception of Recreation Department sweatshirts during inclement weather, is permitted during your scheduled work hours.** Additionally, staff shirts, hats, and bathing suits may not be altered or disfigured in any way.
- Lifeguards have the option to purchase additional staff bathing suits and sweatshirts from the department if the need arises. Availability is subject to the supplier and prices may vary from year to year.

WORKING WITH THE PUBLIC

- The duty of all staff is to ensure that all participants have a healthy, safe, and enjoyable stay at all swimming facilities.
- All employees must be courteous, helpful, friendly, and informative to the public. The interaction you have with the public does one of two things: it **elevates** or **damages** the public's perception of the department you work for.
- Be tactful, consistent, yet firm, when enforcing the rules and regulations for your facility. Take the time to explain to people the reason behind the rule/policy is for the safety of our participants.
- Answer questions willingly and to the best of your ability. If you do not know the answer to a question, politely direct the person to the staff member you feel can answer the question. Never exhibit anger or belligerence (inclined to be aggressive or hostile) to the public. If the person is angry and you are not getting anywhere with them, direct them to the Facility Manager. If the Facility Manager is not available, take their name and phone number.
- If a person is physically or verbally threatening or harassing, call the police (911) immediately. Call office staff when able.

EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

- Disciplinary action may be given for just cause. Examples of just cause are: tardiness, unexcused absence, insubordination (not obeying orders, disobedience), cell phone use, sleeping, stealing, use of drugs or alcohol before or during work, use of inappropriate language to fellow staff and/or the public, carrying weapons, continued disregard for staff manual and/or City Policy, incompetence or ineffectiveness in performing emergency procedures and/or daily duties. (The preceding are examples only and are not meant to be a complete listing).
- Immediate disciplinary action may include any of the following: Oral or written warning, suspension, dismissal. All disciplinary actions will become part of the employee's permanent personnel file.

OCCUPATIONAL MEDICAL EXPOSURE PROTOCOL

In the event of a Bloodborne Pathogen (skin and/or mucous membrane contact with another person's blood) or other occupational medical exposure* (e.g.; scabies, lice, tuberculosis, etc.), the affected employee should:

- Follow recommended guideline for post-exposure treatment (wash exposed area with soap and warm water or flush mucous membrane)
- Immediately report the exposure incident to supervisor
- Complete any necessary reporting forms as soon as possible
- If the exposure occurs during normal business hours (M-F, 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM), call Middlesex Hospital OCC MED (Occupational Medicine) at **860.358.2750**. Press **Option 6** to schedule to speak with a health-care provider**. Instructions will follow.

If the exposure occurs outside of normal business hours, call OCC MED at **860.358.2750**. Press **Option 0** and ask the operator to speak with the on-call provider. Instructions will follow.

Middlesex Hospital Occupational Medicine is located at 534 Saybrook Road (2nd floor).

***If the exposure also constitutes a medical emergency, the employee should report to Middlesex Hospital Emergency Department.**

****On-call physician or nurse.**

ELECTRONIC MONITORING POLICY

The City's e-mail system is a tool for internal and external communications; it is paid for and maintained by the City of Middletown. Pursuant to Connecticut General Statute, Section 31-48d and Public Act 98-142, An Act Requiring Notice to Employees of Electronic Monitoring by Employers, employers engaged in electronic monitoring are required to give prior notice to employees. City of Middletown employees should recognize that their work activities and communications might be subject to electronic monitoring.

"Electronic monitoring" is defined as "the collection of information on an employer's premises concerning employees' activities or communications by any means other than direct observation, including the use of a computer, telephone, wire, radio, camera, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo-optical systems, but not including the collection of information (A) for security purposes in common areas of the employer's premises which are held out for use by the public, or (B) which is prohibited under state or federal law."

Employees may be subject to electronic monitoring or recording (including sound, voice, or video devices) while in City municipal facilities and other locations where City business is conducted, except Section 31-48b, C.G.S. prohibits any such monitoring or recording in areas designed for health or personal comfort of the employees or for safeguarding of their possessions, such as restrooms, locker rooms, or lounges.

Employees should understand that their activities involving City computer equipment and computer and/or electronic documents, data and communications, including voice, e-mail and Internet usage, are subject to being monitored, recorded, and reviewed. The appropriate use of City technologies, prohibited behaviors while using said technologies, and consequences of misuse are documented in the Information Technology and Equipment Use Policy. Furthermore, the City's Sexual Harassment policy applies to the use of e-mail and unacceptable behavior in the workplace is also unacceptable in cyberspace.

Employees should be aware of the fact that "deleting" an item does not mean that the item cannot be monitored and reviewed. As a result, files, data, and messages in the system are subject to access and review and are not confidential, despite any information to the contrary in literature or instructions describing the systems. There is no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to the use of these systems and information received or stored.

Employees will not be subject to electronic monitoring or recording of the content of their direct telephone conversations, except as may be permitted under state and federal law.

Section 31-48d prohibits an employer, except under limited circumstances, to electronically monitor without giving written notice to the employee. The only exception to this policy will be the telephone monitoring of police investigative lines, which may only be monitored by sworn police personnel.

Personal recording devices that are used to record conversations with individuals without that person's knowledge and/or consent are prohibited. Violation of this provision of this policy is subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Employee questions about this policy can be addressed to Mr. Bryan Skowera, Director of Information Systems, at 860.638.4997. The Director of Information Systems and the Director of Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management are responsible for the implementation of this policy. This policy shall be posted and distributed annually to all employees of the City of Middletown.

MISCELLANEOUS

Alcoholic Beverages - The possession or use of alcoholic beverages and/or drugs by employees before and/or during working hours is prohibited.

Sleeping - Any employee found sleeping during working hours will be terminated immediately.

Smoking - Smoking is not allowed in any City-owned facility. Smoking is not allowed during scheduled working hours.

Transportation - Employees may never transport program participants.

Telephones - Guardroom telephones are to be used for emergencies or official use only.

Cell Phone - Cell phones are not permitted during working hours. If you are on break, you may use your phone in the designated area at your facility.

Mandated reporters – as a City of Middletown summer employee you are a mandated reporter. You are required to report or cause a report to be made when, in the ordinary course of their employment or profession, they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of 18 has been abused, neglected or is placed in imminent risk of serious harm.

(CT General Statutes §17a-101a)

Social Media- No City of Middletown Recreation employee may post pictures on any form of social media, including but not limited to Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter, and Instagram, of any City of Middletown Recreation program participants under the age of 18 years old.

Reading - Reading of unrelated books, magazines or newspapers during working hours is NOT permitted.

Equipment and Supplies - Staff may not purchase or order supplies without the permission of the Aquatic Supervisor.

Handouts - All program-related information (e.g. handouts to kids) prior to distribution, must be reviewed and approved by the Aquatic Supervisor.

Music - The use of radios and/or headsets is not allowed during working hours. An AM radio may be kept in the guard room for updated weather forecasts. Use of musical instruments is not allowed during work hours.

Card Playing - Card playing during scheduled hours is never allowed.

Program Completion (e.g. end of day) - At the completion of a program, all children must be picked up before staff may leave. If a pickup does not occur during working hours of the employees, the Facility Manager will take volunteers or assign appropriate staff to stay. Employee(s) will be paid for staying.

Personal Belongings - Employees should not leave any personal belongings at work. The Recreation Department is not responsible for items left, stolen or vandalized.

Eating and drinking - An area at each facility will be determined by the Aquatic Supervisor. Employees shall consume food only during scheduled lunch breaks and snack times or with permission from the Program Director. Employees may not leave the site to pick up food while working, and no food may be delivered to site (UberEats, Doordash, Grub Hub, etc.)

Participant Valuables - Pool Staff may not accept valuables or other items, from General Public for “Safekeeping”.

Relatives and friends - Should not visit or call employees during working hours unless it is an emergency.

LIFEGUARDING

(I) WHILE GUARDING - IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SKILLS, GUIDELINES, AND TRAINING MANUALS PROVIDED BY AMERICAN RED CROSS BASIC LIFEGUARDING AND/OR LIFEGUARD TRAINING CERTIFICATION, WE WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASIZE THE FOLLOWING:

- You are to face the water at all times, be alert, and not allow anything to obstruct your sight.
- No more than one guard in a chair or station at the same time.
- The lounge chairs are for patrons only. They are not for the lifeguard staff use.
- Do not allow the public or fellow staff members to visit with you while you are on duty.
- Continually scan your area of responsibility for swimmers in trouble or underwater.
- You are responsible for your area and cannot give that responsibility to a parent or any member of the public. If for any reason you leave your chair/station, make sure you have the approval of the Facility Manager and a replacement relieves you. At no other time may you leave your assigned chair/station, except for an emergency.
- An alert and conscientious guard provides a far greater service to the public by preventing accidents and injuries before they happen. Constant vigilance (alert watchfulness) and the ability to anticipate unsafe acts are important lifeguarding skills. Do not allow individuals or groups to distract your attention.
- At the pool, if you feel a person lacks adequate swimming ability, ask them to swim in a shallower section.
- At the lake, always watch for children who may wander over their heads. You are responsible for the swimmers in your area at all times. Treat everyone as a non-swimmer.
- Friends, family, and off-duty staff should not be loitering in the bathhouse, parking lot, guardroom, or pool deck.
- City phones are to be answered and are to be used for business purposes only.
- Patrons who are at the facility should be attended to immediately and courteously.
- All patrons should be greeted as they arrive at the pool.
- There is to be no horsing around in the bathhouse, guardroom, parking lot, pool deck area or beach.

ROTATING CHAIRS

A) Do not get out of the chair until the relieving guard is standing next to the chair and watching the pool/lake. After getting down from the chair, watch the pool/lake while the other guard climbs into the chair. The Emergency Air Horn is always in the hand of one of the guards.

B) Make sure the pool/lake is being watched during guard changes. Brief the new guard of any situation that requires attention, but do not use the change for lengthy conversations.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

All employees have job descriptions. Please read your job description on our website www.middletonct.gov/recreation, under "Seasonal Employment" and keep one for your own information, as desired.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION

If an employee gets injured while at work, a Workman's Compensation Form must be filled out, within 24 hours. These are available on request from your immediate Supervisor.

EMPLOYEE EVALUATION FORMS

All seasonal staff will be evaluated at the end of week six. Your evaluation will be fair, consistent, and honest. Keeping an employee in a position they are not qualified for or motivated to do a good job in, does not help the employee, participants, or programs. Everyone must sit with director and supervisor for their evaluation. The evaluation must be signed by all three staff members.

LIGHTING

For general area lighting (lobby, bathrooms, guardroom, and basket room) the circuit breaker panel is located in the basket room near the boys' pass through window. The lights to be turned off or on daily are listed on the panel door. Security lights are labeled. Outside lights should be left on when you leave. Basement lights are controlled from a panel on the right side of the entrance doors.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

All staff scheduled to work must report regardless of the weather unless otherwise notified by the Facility Manager or Aquatic Supervisor.

In cases of thunder, lightning, and/or rain (rain which hampers visibility of the bottom), the swimmers are to clear the pool/lake and deck/beach area for approximately 30 minutes after the last clap of thunder or sight of lightning. Until the weather improves, the pool/lake will be closed temporarily and the following will apply:

- All patrons must leave the beach, water, and/or pool deck. No patrons will be allowed to remain under trees, pavilions, bathhouse porch, during an electrical storm. Encourage patrons with transportation to leave the facility as soon as possible.
- All patrons that do not have transportation (or that have bikes) should remain inside the facilities (pool lobby area) away from doorways, showers, telephones, lavatory, and anything else that conducts electricity.
- Continual observation by staff must be made during periods of questionable weather.
- During inclement weather, when the pool/lake is still open, but there are no swimmers, lifeguards will be expected to clean the guardroom and surrounding areas, participate in emergency drills, complete swimming lesson plans, etc.
- On days of constant rain, the pool/lake will be closed. Lifeguards, on a rotating basis, will be assigned to stay at the pool/lake to answer the phone and inform people that the facility is closed. Guards will be paid for hours worked.

MANDATED REPORTER

All staff must watch the DCF training video (link below) and submit the completed certificate to our department, with hire paperwork.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

Staff and volunteers are expected to act in a manner that upholds our principles at all times when you are in our facility or at Recreation Division sponsored activities. We expect you to behave in a way that shows respect and caring for others, which includes not using any language or engaging in any action that can hurt or frighten another person or that falls below a generally accepted standard of conduct. Specifically, action which does not show respect for others is not permitted includes:

1. Clothing, body markings or other visible items with hateful, vulgar or profane writing or pictures is prohibited.
2. Using angry or vulgar language is prohibited.
3. Making physical contact with another person in any angry or threatening way is prohibited.
4. Engaging in sexual activity is prohibited.
5. Harassing or intimidating by words, gestures, body language or any other menacing behavior is prohibited.
6. Stealing or other behavior which results in the destruction or loss of property is prohibited.
7. Any other conduct of an inappropriate, threatening or offensive nature is prohibited.
8. In order to protect staff, volunteers, and program participants – at no time during a Recreation Division program may a staff or volunteer person be alone with a single child where they cannot be observed by others. As staff supervise children, they should space themselves in a way that other staff can see them.
9. Staff/volunteers shall never leave a child unsupervised.
10. Restroom supervision: Staff/volunteers will make sure the restroom is not occupied by suspicious or unknown individuals before allowing children to use the facilities. Staff/volunteers will stand in the doorway while children are using the restroom. This policy allows privacy for children and protection for staff (not being alone with a child). If staff assists younger children, doors to the facility must remain open. No child regardless of age should ever enter a bathroom alone on a field trip. Always send children in pairs, and whenever possible, with staff.
11. Staff/volunteers should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs - diapering, putting on bathing suits, taking showers, etc. When this is not feasible, staff should be positioned so they are visible to others.
12. Staff/volunteers shall not abuse children including:
 - a. Physical abuse – strike, spank, shake, slap
 - b. Verbal abuse – humiliate, degrade, threaten
 - c. Sexual abuse – inappropriate touch or verbal exchange
 - d. Mental abuse – shaming or cruelty
 - e. Neglect – withholding food, water, basic care, etc.

****Any type of abuse will not be tolerated and may be cause for immediate dismissal.**
13. Staff/volunteers must use positive techniques of guidance, including:
14. Redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism.
15. Staff will have age appropriate expectations and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline.
16. *****Physical restraint is used only by Preventative Management Retreat trained staff.**

17. Staff/volunteers responds to children with respect and consideration and treats all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion, disability, color, national origin, genetics and culture.
18. Staff/volunteers will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched in areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.
19. Staff/volunteers will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents and staff.
20. Staff may not solicit members, participants or other staff for contributions or sale of products except on behalf of other non-profits.
21. Staff/volunteers must appear clean, neat and appropriately attired.
22. Using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs during working hours is prohibited. Drugs include the misuse of prescribed or over the counter medications.
23. Smoking or use of tobacco is prohibited on City property and as well as during working hours.
24. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life and any kind of harassment in the presence of children, parents, members or volunteers is prohibited.
25. Staff/volunteers may not transport children in their own vehicles or allow youth participants old enough to drive to transport younger children in the programs.
26. Before any communication with participants outside of program hours, discuss the nature with the Program Director.
27. Staff/volunteers may not date program participants under the age of 18 years.
28. Under no circumstance should staff release children to anyone other than authorized parent, guardian, or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the Recreation Division).
29. Any employee found sleeping or lying down during working hours will be terminated immediately.
30. Staff/volunteers are to report to a supervisor any other staff or volunteer who violates any of the policies listed in the Code of Conduct.
31. Staff/Volunteers limit physical contact with participants as much as possible. Do not carry or tickle or touch participants. Do not allow participants to sit on your lap.

Any violation of this Code of Conduct may result in immediate termination.