



County of Santa Cruz

Health Services Agency ♦ Environmental Health Division

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PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL SANITATION AND SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES

In order to operate public swimming pools in a safe and healthy manner, these guidelines should be implemented to help slow the spread of COVID-19 and protect pool users. The guidelines provided below should be used as a tool to create a written plan for effective operation of community public pools. **At this time, indoor spas/hot tubs and saunas are not allowed to operate.**

RECOMMENDED SIGNAGE

Signage is recommended as a visual cue for communication to pool users; the following items are recommended to be incorporated with posted signage at all pool enclosure entrances:

- Do not enter if you have fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea
- Wear facial covering when not actively in the water
- Maintain a minimum 6-foot distance from others both in the water and deck area. No unnecessary physical contact with those outside your family unit.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

The following listed items are recommended to enforce social distancing efforts in a community pool setting:

- Change layout of pool deck (e.g. tapping off areas, removing chairs and table, signage)
- Provide physical cues or barriers to promote social distancing both in and out of the water (e.g. Plexiglass)
- Discourage people from sharing equipment that is difficult to disinfect (e.g., snorkels, masks, goggles).
- Provide enough equipment for guests such as kick boards, pool noodles, or other flotation devices to minimize sharing.
- Active lifeguards should not be expected to monitor social distancing or use of cloth face covering. These individuals must be ready to respond to an emergency quickly.

DISINFECTION REQUIREMENTS

In order to maintain a safe and healthy community pool facility the following items require implementation:

- Operators/users are required to frequently disinfect all chairs, tables, entry/exit gates, pool handrails, door handles, restroom facilities and all other common touch points.
- If pool facilities are in constant use, hourly disinfection is recommended.
- If the facility has less occupancy, disinfection between users would be recommended.
- Facilities with no onsite representation, may provide sanitizer wipes that the pool users can use to disinfect common touch points before and after use.
- Stock all handwashing dispensers with soap and single use towels. Provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% - 70% alcohol for pool users /visitors.
- Encourage pool users to provide their own towels for use and hand sanitizer.

(Examples of disinfectants include alcohol solutions with at least 60 – 70 % alcohol. Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used to make a bleach solution, mix 5 tablespoons or 1/3 cup bleach per gallon of water as per CDC Guidelines or List N disinfectants approved by the EPA)

REDUCTION IN OCCUPANCY

For locations that do not have a designated onsite person to monitor the pool area (e.g. HOA and apartment complexes), a system should be designed to limit the number of pool occupants. Here are some suggestions for decreasing occupancy load:

- Reservation times designed by the designated operator (preferably same household use.)
- Sign-up board for the pool user.
- Consider reservations for lap lanes for individuals or half lanes for individual household use.

GENERAL USE RECOMMENDATIONS

All parts of the community facility including restrooms, showers and changing areas should be disinfected and adhere to social distancing parameters. Additionally, employee training and health concerns should be addressed prior to opening of the pool communities. These are some points of interest:

- Implement employee training and health screening using the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Guidelines as a tool.
- Designate a person to monitor restrooms or changing facilities to ensure all dispensers are stocked with soap and paper towels and running water.
- Restrooms, showers and changing facilities should remain open to allow access by the pool users and frequently disinfected based on usage.

The state guidance links below can be used as a reference tool for all recommendations:

<https://covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-campgrounds.pdf>

<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-hotels-lodging-rentals--en.pdf>

<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness--en.pdf>

THE HEALTH OFFICER'S ORDER PROHIBITS GATHERINGS AT THE POOL. THE POOL MUST BE ACTIVELY MANAGED AND MONITORED TO ENSURE COMPLIANCE WITH THESE GUIDELINES.

IT IS THE LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY OF THE POOL OWNER/OPERATOR TO ENSURE ALL APPLICABLE REQUIREMENTS ARE FOLLOWED TO PROTECT THE SAFETY OF THE POOL USERS. IN ANY EVENT, IF IS NOT ATTAINABLE THEN THE FACILITY SHOULD REMAIN CLOSED.