

10A NCAC 09 .1403 ACTIVITIES INVOLVING WATER IN CHILD CARE CENTERS

(a) The requirements in this Rule apply to child care center "aquatic activities," which are defined as activities that take place in or around a body of water such as swimming, swimming instruction, wading, and visits to water parks. Aquatic activities do not include water play activities such as water table play, slip and slide activities, or playing in sprinklers.

(b) Aquatic activities involving the following are prohibited:

- (1) hot tubs;
- (2) spas;
- (3) saunas or steam rooms;
- (4) portable wading pools; and
- (5) natural bodies of water and other unfiltered, nondisinfected containments of water.

(c) For every 25 children in care participating in aquatic activities, there shall be at least one person who has a life guard training certificate issued by the Red Cross or other training determined by the Division to be equivalent to the Red Cross training, appropriate for both the type of body of water and type of aquatic activity. These lifeguards shall not be counted in the required staff/child ratios referenced in Paragraph (e) of this Rule.

(d) Children under the age of three shall not participate in aquatic activities except to the extent necessary to implement any child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP).

(e) The following staff/child ratios shall be maintained whenever children participate in aquatic activities:

| Age of Children | Ratio Staff/Children |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 3 to 4 Years | 1/8 |
| 4 to 5 Years | 1/10 |
| 5 Years and Older | 1/13 |

Notwithstanding the staff/child ratios, at no time shall there be fewer than two staff members supervising the aquatic activity.

(f) Children shall be adequately supervised by center staff at all times while participating in aquatic activities. For purposes of this Rule, "Adequate supervision" means that half of the center staff needed to meet the staff/child ratios in Paragraph (e) of this Rule is in the water and the other half is out of the water. If an uneven number of staff are needed to meet the required staff/child ratios, the majority shall be in the water. Staff shall be stationed in pre-assigned areas that will enable them at all times to hear, see, and respond to the children whether in or out of the water. Children shall not enter the water before center staff are stationed in their pre-assigned areas. Center staff shall devote their full attention to supervising the children in their pre-assigned areas of coverage and shall communicate with one another about children moving from one area to another area.

(g) Prior to children participating in aquatic activities, the center shall develop policies that address the following:

- (1) aquatic safety hazards;
- (2) pool and aquatic activity area supervision including restroom or changing room use;
- (3) how discipline will be handled during aquatic activities;
- (4) the facility's off-premises and transportation policies and procedures; and
- (5) that children shall be directed to exit the water during an emergency.

(h) Before staff first supervise children on an aquatic activity, and annually thereafter, staff shall sign and date statements that they have reviewed:

- (1) the center policies as specified in Paragraph (g) of this Rule;
- (2) any guidelines provided by the pool operator or other off-site aquatic facility; and
- (3) the requirements of this Rule.

The statement shall be maintained in the staff person's personnel file for one year or until it is superseded by a new statement.

(i) Centers shall obtain written permission from parents for participation in aquatic activities. The written permission shall include a statement that parents are aware of the center's aquatic policies specified in Paragraph (g) of this Rule. The center shall maintain copies of written parental permission in each child's file.

(j) Any outdoor swimming pool located on the child care center premises shall be enclosed by a fence that is at least four feet high, separated from the remaining outdoor play area by that fence, and locked and inaccessible to children when not in use.

(k) Swimming pool safety rules shall be posted and visible to children and staff for any swimming pool located on the child care center premises. These rules shall state:

- (1) the location of a First Aid kit;
- (2) that only water toys are permitted;
- (3) that children are not allowed to run or push one another;

- (4) that swimming is allowed only when at least two adults are present; and
- (5) that glass objects are not allowed.
- (l) All swimming pools used by children shall meet the "Rules Governing Public Swimming Pools" in accordance with 15A NCAC 18A .2500 which are incorporated by reference, including subsequent amendments. A copy of these Rules can be found at <http://ehs.ncpublichealth.com/docs/rules/294306-9-2500.pdf> and is available at no charge.
- (m) Educational activities, such as observing tadpoles, exploring mud, or learning about rocks and vegetation shall be permitted.
- (n) Boating, rafting, and canoeing activities are permitted. Prior to participating in recreational activities conducted on the water, children shall wear an age or size appropriate personal floatation device approved by the United States Coast Guard. This personal floatation device shall be worn for the duration of the activity.

History Note: Authority G.S. 110-85; 110-88(5); 110-91(1),(6); 143B-168.3;
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