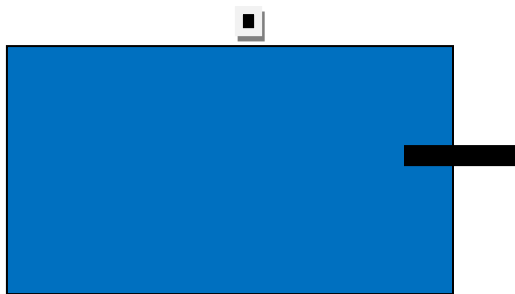


## Lifeguard Zones of Protection

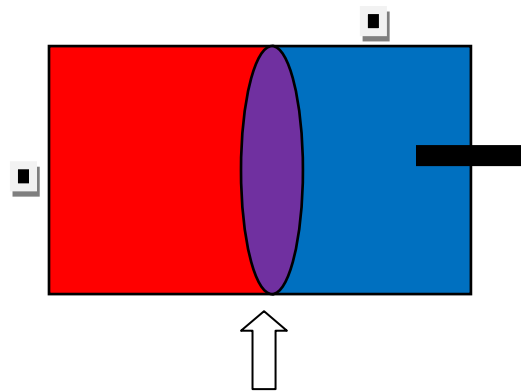
Each lifeguard station or position should be assigned a specific area of responsibility or zone of protection. Zones of protection are created to clearly define a lifeguards' coverage/responsibility and help to promote "ownership" of the zone of protection for the lifeguards. Zones should clearly define primary and overlapping areas. Except for single lifeguarded attractions, all zones of protection should provide an overlap to ensure that no area is left unprotected.

The diagrams below are examples of zone diagrams for different staffing levels at the same pool.

1 Lifeguard Zone Coverage



2 Lifeguards Zone Coverage



Zone overlap area

Zones of protection should be carefully designed to allow the lifeguard to view the entire zone of protection and allow the lifeguard to recognize and reach a guest in distress within an appropriate time standard.

Lifeguard zones of protection may change depending on the number of lifeguard stations and on the number of guests in the pool (examples would be a wave pool or other large pool/attraction). When station locations or staffing are modified, it is important to ensure that the lifeguards clearly understand which zones of protection are included in their new area of responsibility. It is equally important during a rescue or any other time a lifeguard may need to leave their position, that the additional lifeguards on the pool are aware of the modifications in the zones of protection.

When creating zones of protection, supervisors should note certain coverage concerns. First, there should be zone coverage for all staffing levels, and these zone changes should be clearly communicated (training, in-service and posted for all to view) to the lifeguards. If zones of protection are not altered for staffing changes, it may result in areas of the pool being unprotected. Second, changes in light or glare should be taken into consideration when deciding on zones of protection. It may be necessary to change or add lifeguard positions at certain times of day due to the glare of the sun, facility lighting, or pool lights. Lastly, occlusions or attractions should be taken into consideration when creating zones of protection. It may not be possible for lifeguards to see around play structures, waterfalls, and other play amenities. In

cases such as this, it may be necessary to change or add additional positions to provide clear zones of protection for the lifeguards.

Zones of protection may be introduced to lifeguards during training in a variety of ways. Supervisors should provide written documentation or charts (commonly call Zone Coverage Diagrams) detailing each lifeguard position and corresponding zone of protection. Additionally lifeguards should be positioned at each zone of protection and shown their area of responsibility with the assistance of the graphical documentation of the zone of protection. Having zone coverage diagrams posted or accessible to all lifeguards ensures constant access to zone changes and helps eliminate confusion as staffing/swimmer levels change. Posting the diagrams at each lifeguard position is quickly becoming a best practice.