



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, New York State recognizes the benefits of swimming and other aquatic activities, including their positive effects on overall physical and mental health; and

Whereas, drowning is the leading cause of death in children ages 1-4 and the second leading cause of unintentional injury death in children ages 5-14; Black and African American children ages 5-14 drown in pools at significantly higher rates than their peers and American Indian and Alaska Native people have the highest overall drowning rate by race; and

Whereas, there are over 4,500 unintentional drowning deaths each year in the United States, and drowning remains one of the top four causes of unintentional deaths up until age 55, and drowning is fast and silent occurring in as little as 20 to 60 seconds; and

Whereas, through the landmark NY SWIMS program, New York State is transforming access to water recreation by investing in state-of-the-art facilities, revitalizing and building municipal pools, strengthening the lifeguard workforce, and expanding life-saving swimming instruction—including free “learn to swim” classes and a grant program to reimburse transportation costs to New York State facilities that offer nationally recognized learn to swim curriculum; and

Whereas, whether swimming in public or private pools, utilizing hydrotherapy, taking a bath, or experiencing the thrill of a waterpark, water education is essential to building water competency, ensuring the ability to anticipate, avoid, and survive drowning situations, as well as recognize and provide assistance to those in need; and

Whereas, New York State reaffirms that it is critical for all New Yorkers to have access to water safety programs, so they can safely enjoy the movement and community provided by swimming and water recreation;

Now, Therefore, I, Kathy Hochul, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim the month of May 2026, as

WATER SAFETY MONTH

in the Empire State.

Given under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State
at the Capitol in the City of Albany this first day
of June in the year two thousand twenty-six.



Kathy Hochul
Governor

Karen Persichilli Keogh

Secretary to the Governor
Karen Persichilli Keogh