

LIFEGUARD

Information provided by CHOICES Career & Education Advice

WHO IS A LIFEGUARD?

Relaxing by a pool or the sea while observing people nearby frolicking in water while,, of course, heroically jumping into action to save someone from drowning every now and then.

While being a lifeguard is an enjoyable, rewarding, and sometimes exciting and usually outdoor job, ensuring the safety of swimmers is not as easy or glamorous as people might think. It's not exactly "the life of Riley".

WHAT THE WORK INVOLVES

Lifeguards find work at beaches, holiday resorts, hotels, schools, water parks, community centres, indoor pools, entertainment complexes and other such places where pools or bodies of water exist. Their duties can include:

- Closely observing swimmers as well as persons nearby in order to spot and respond to safety incidents
- Performing first aid on persons who have sustained injuries
- Preventing persons from entering danger zones or behaving recklessly
- Teaching basic rules, safety classes and swimming lessons
- Keeping the grounds tidy, maintaining equipment and treating pools
- Attending to lost children



This job might not be the regular 9-5 experience as pool hours may vary according to the type of facility. They may also offer services for guests until late in the night and will definitely require services on public holidays and weekends.

WHO IS THIS CAREER FOR?

To be a lifeguard, you need to be:

- In great physical condition
- A strong swimmer
- Able to stay focused and alert – even on slow days on which there are not many people
- Willing to be outside in all types of weather
- Passionate about helping others
- A patient teacher and excellent communicator
- Able to problem solve quickly
- Able to stay calm in emergencies
- Willing to take risks as you might be required to enter dangerous situations

WHAT CAN I EARN?

As a lifeguard, you will probably earn a low to mid-level salary, depending on your employer, and may need another job to supplement your income. This may not be too difficult to juggle if you're being hired on a part-time or seasonal basis.

HOW DO I QUALIFY?

You can prepare for lifeguarding by taking swimming lessons and even joining your school's swim team. You could also study subjects such as geography and environmental studies to learn about things like currents, tides etc.

Once you are over 18, you can be certified by obtaining the NRCA lifeguard license. To do so, you must pass an exam which tests your literacy and fitness levels, along with your rescue skills. While this licence allows you to work at all beaches across Jamaica, keep in mind that you must obtain different certifications to work abroad.

WHO OFFERS TRAINING IN JAMAICA?

Organisations such as the Jamaica Lifesaving Society (JLSS) and the YMCA of Kingston offer training.

CONCLUSION

Although lifeguarding doesn't really revolve around relaxing and soaking up sun, it's still a remarkable occupation. It allows you to help and connect with people each day, work in some scenic locations and even save lives. In other words, while lifeguarding isn't as glamorous as it might look on TV, one could argue that the reality is even better.

Continue reading for more on exciting careers for now and the future. Send your comments and suggestions to Angela deFreitas, General Manager of CHOICE Career & Education Advice- e-mail- info@choicesonlinejm.com. Do The Career Key Test online at - <https://www.careerkey.org/career-tests/careerkeydiscovery/Caribbean-CHOICES.html>