

AQUATIC SITES & ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Section 4: Beach Operations & Waterfront Layout Management (Standard PA.9)

- **Operating Property:** Camp Live Oak
- **Accreditation Compliance:** American Camp Association (ACA) PA.9
- **Exclusive Aquatic Site:** Natural Ocean Beachfront
- **Document Code:** SOP-AQ-PA9

1. Policy Purpose & Scope

Camp Live Oak utilizes the ocean beach as its exclusive aquatic site for swimming, wading, and beachfront operations. Because natural coastal environments feature changing tidal movements, surf conditions, and shifting sands, strict controls must govern the design, layout, evaluation, and capacity of the active beach zone. This policy establishes the protocols mandated under ACA standard **PA.9** to guarantee a clear, safe, and controlled open-water perimeter.

2. Daily Environmental Clearance: "Beach Conditions" Service Verification

Prior to any camper or staff member accessing the beach site for swimming, a formal environmental safety check must be executed and recorded. The Waterfront Director or designated Trip Leader must contact the local **"Beach Conditions" service** every morning to obtain the active marine forecast and surf report.

- **Acceptable Swim Criteria:** Swimming operations are explicitly prohibited unless the Beach Conditions service report confirms that general water clarity, rip current indices, and surf conditions are fully acceptable for recreational beach activities.
- **Water Quality & Harmful Blooms:** The daily check must verify that no public health beach advisories, high bacterial counts, or harmful algal blooms (HABs) are active for the designated coastal zone.
- **Mandatory Logging:** The exact time of the call, the flagged surf hazard color level (e.g., green, yellow, or red flag), and the specific conditions reported by the Beach Conditions service must be logged in writing within the daily waterfront ledger before programming clears.

3. Capacity Limits & Cohort Management

To preserve tight supervisor lines of sight and protect participant accountability in a high-noise, open beachfront setting, strict capacity caps are enforced at the shoreline.

Mandatory Site Capacity Cap: A maximum of **20 to 25 campers** are permitted on the active beach site at any single time. No oversized camp assemblies or joint unit cohorts may converge on the active swim zone simultaneously. If a camp section exceeds 25 participants, staff must partition the group into staggered rotational shifts, maintaining strict roster numbers on the sand.

4. Boundaries & Visual Demarcation: The Cone Zone Rule

Unlike standard swimming pools with static walls, an ocean swimming perimeter must be physically constructed and dynamically managed using high-visibility mobile markers on the sand and in the water.

The Approved Cone Zone Protocol: All in-water swimming, wading, and body-boarding are strictly restricted to the **approved zone marked between the cones**. Prior to camper arrival, lifeguards will place two oversized, high-visibility safety cones on the dry sand to establish the hard lateral (left and right) perimeters of the swim area.

- **Strict Lateral Constraints:** Campers are universally prohibited from swimming, wading, or playing outside the lateral lines established by the cones. Any participant drifting close to or past a cone boundary must be immediately signaled by a lifeguard's whistle and directed back to the center of the approved zone.
- **Water Perimeters:** The outer (depth) boundary of the cone zone is established based on the swim classifications verified under camp standard PA.6. Heavily anchored perimeter buoys will track the deep-water boundary inline with the sand-cone coordinates.

5. Site Setup & Safety Infrastructure

Prior to opening the approved cone zone for daily rotations, the lifeguard team must complete the following infrastructure setup tasks:

1. **Physical Substrate Check:** Complete a physical walking sweep of the sand and shallow wade line between the cones to check for sharp shell deposits, hazardous debris, or biological risks (e.g., jellyfish, stingrays).
2. **Lifeguard Tower Staging:** Position the primary rescue equipment—including rescue tubes, backboards, masks, snorkels, and emergency signaling horns—directly centered behind the coned swim perimeter.
3. **FEP Alignment:** Secure the traveling Field Emergency Portfolio (FEP) inside a waterproof dry pack at the central lifeguard watch station, ensuring immediate access to trip master rosters and parental treatment waivers per standard PD.4.

ACA Field Audit Compliance Note (Standard PA.9): This document serves as Camp Live Oak's official operational policy directive for standard PA.9. File a copy inside your core aquatics manual and field trip directories. During an on-site accreditation review, the ACA evaluator will physically verify that your swim zone is actively marked with cones, check that your daily waterfront logs prove a morning call was placed to the Beach Conditions service, and observe live beach rotations to ensure headcounts do not cross the 25-camper threshold.