

When is the Best Time to Start Your Summer Rec Program Staff Search?



Now!

Planning for your town's summer recreation programs for next year starts **now**— and VLCT is here to help! ***Our newly updated resources for hiring lifeguards and day camp staff*** are packed with proven strategies to attract, train, and retain the dedicated team your community needs.

Start Early—Recruitment for Next Summer Begins This Summer! The most successful summer programs start their hiring process months in advance. VLCT encourages towns to jumpstart their staff search with these actionable recruitment strategies:

1. Career Fairs & School Outreach

- Attend local high school and college career fairs to present lifeguard and camp staff opportunities.
- Bring eye-catching brochures, posters, and flyers that showcase the benefits, training, and impact of these summer jobs.
- Set up interactive displays or Q&A tables to engage potential candidates.

2. Partner with Swim Teams and Coaches

- Collaborate with local swim teams and aquatic clubs to recruit skilled swimmers interested in lifeguarding.
- Offer info sessions during swim meets or practices to connect with prospective candidates.



3. Community Engagement & Events

- Host open house events at your pool or camp facility. Invite the community to meet staff, watch lifeguard demonstrations, and learn about training and certification.
- Organize free community workshops on water safety and CPR—these not only serve residents but also introduce new faces to summer job opportunities.

4. Network and Spread the Word

- Encourage current staff to refer friends and family. Consider offering referral bonuses or other incentives for successful hires.
- Engage with local community groups, youth organizations, and recreation centers. Post flyers and announcements in libraries, gyms, and youth clubs.
- Foster a positive, supportive workplace culture—happy staff are your best recruiters!

5. Promote Lifeguard Training & Certification

- Organize lifeguard certification classes and promote them as an employment pathway.
- Offer introductory sessions or scholarship programs to make lifeguard training accessible and appealing.

6. Connect with Local Businesses



- Partner with gyms, sports stores, and local businesses to display recruitment materials or co-host community events.

7. Action Steps for Your Recreation Department:

- Schedule visits to career fairs and swim meets this fall and winter.
- Design engaging recruitment materials that highlight job perks and skills development.
- Plan at least one open house or workshop to build community interest.
- Establish a referral bonus program to reward staff who help recruit new hires.
- Reach out now to local businesses for partnership opportunities.

Some towns find success by offering flexible scheduling and covering training costs, making it easier for students and first-time staff to join. Others build strong alumni networks, inviting past staff to return for another rewarding summer.

By combining outreach, incentives, and community engagement, your summer programs can attract a diverse and enthusiastic team — ensuring a safe, fun, and memorable season for everyone!

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