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# Leader/ Instructor Position Description

**ROLE:** Plan and lead quality Arthritis Foundation/YMCA Aquatic Program classes.

## QUALIFICATIONS:

1. Certification as an Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program Leader/ Instructor requires:
  - Successful completion of an Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program Leader/ Instructor Training Workshop.
  - Successful teaching of at least six one-hour Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program class sessions within six months of completing the Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program Leader/ Instructor Training Workshop and submission of participant data and completed certification application form to the Arthritis Foundation.
  - Teaching at least six class sessions annually and submission of participant data.
  - Attendance at recertification training every three years.
2. Basic requirements for LEADERS include:
  - Current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
  - Ability to swim at least 25 yards using any stroke without stopping; ability to jump into deep water, surface, and either float for a minimum of 10 minutes or tread water for a minimum of 1 minute; and ability to perform the recovery position from face up and face down in shallow and deep water.
3. Additional qualifications for INSTRUCTORS:
  - YMCA, Red Cross or other nationally recognized lifeguard or water safety/ rescue certification is required.
  - First aid certification is strongly recommended.
4. In addition to the Instructor qualifications, those teaching the Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program for Juvenile Arthritis must have:
  - Current Infant and Child CPR certification.
  - Successful completion of an Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program for Juvenile Arthritis Instructor Training Workshop.
5. Affiliation with an agency that meets Arthritis Foundation facility standards.
6. Other desirable abilities include:
  - Empathy towards people with arthritis and related diseases gained through personal or professional experience.
  - Interest in working with groups of people with arthritis and related diseases.
  - Experience in teaching exercise classes; skill in group process and instructional techniques.
  - Desire and ability to help others.
  - Strong belief in the value of regular physical activity.

## RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Commit to following all program policies and conduct all class sessions in accordance with the *Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program Instructor's Guide* without changing the exercises or making other changes, additions or deletions. Sign a Statement of Understanding to document this commitment.



2. Participate in pre-class planning and activities as time and ability allows including tasks such as: setting class meeting dates and times, scheduling the pool time, ensuring correct water and air temperature levels; publicizing classes to recruit class participants; notifying the Arthritis Foundation of class schedules; and arranging to register participants.
3. Establish and enforce guidelines for participants:
  - Avoid discussion or promotion of specific physicians, health professionals, health institutions or unproven remedies.
  - Do not provide answers to specific medical questions, specific treatment advice, or individualized exercise programs.
  - Adhere to a “no touch” policy - no one is allowed to manipulate another’s limbs to help with exercises.
  - Remind participants to observe safety principles such as the “two hour pain rule,” slowing down when tired, limiting movements that are painful, and avoiding vigorous exercising of inflamed joints.
4. Monitor the safety of participants during class:
  - Proper pool entry and exit
  - Lifeguard or person with water rescue/ safety certification on duty (consistent with state health regulations)
  - Exercises performed correctly and with limbs/joints immersed
  - Participants monitored for painful grimacing, flushed faces, and other signs of overexertion or hypo/hyperthermia
  - Deck uncluttered
5. Practice emergency drills and understand and comply with the facility’s emergency policies, procedures and practices.
6. Ensure that Participant Release Forms are obtained from new participants and submit timely and accurate participant data (such as Program Information Form) and release forms on a quarterly basis or as required by the Arthritis Foundation.
7. Participate in evaluation procedures established by the Arthritis Foundation, including but not limited to site visits, participant surveys and instructor questionnaires.
8. Inform class participants about other Arthritis Foundation resources and activities that may interest them.
9. Communicate problems, concerns, questions or suggestions promptly to the Arthritis Foundation.

#### **TIME COMMITMENT:**

- Attendance at a one-day leader/ instructor training workshop; those teaching the Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program for Juvenile Arthritis must also attend a half-day program-specific instructor training workshop
- Attendance at half-day recertification workshop every 3 years
- Preparation time (approximately 1-2 hours)
- Class time (approximately 12-16 hours per 6-8 week class series that meets twice a week)
- Logistics time (approximately 2-4 hours per class series)