CAMP NORTHLAND
Red Flag Procedures

Updated May 2026

Red Flag Emergency Procedures

NOTE: Injuries can occur in any area of the lake and across all waterfront specialties. A Red Flag is an emergency procedure initiated when a major injury (most commonly a suspected spinal injury) occurs on or in the lake. While the core response remains consistent, procedures slightly differ depending on the location of the incident. This document separates the response protocol into three distinct sections:

1. **Injuries in the Middle of the Lake** - includes injuries at Ski, Windsports, and Paddle. These situations require coordination between Ski, Swim, and Windsports staff as a standard response team, regardless of which specialty the injury occurs in.
2. **Injuries at Inflatables** - Ski staff are not involved in the emergency response. Swim and Windsports are the only waterfront specialties involved.
3. **Land Spinal Procedures**

Please follow the procedures outlined in the appropriate sections based on the injury's location, and maintain clear communication on Channel 1 (the designated emergency channel) throughout any Red Flag emergency.

PART 1: Injuries in the Middle of the Lake

Detailed Overall Procedure

If a suspected spinal injury or other major injury occurs on or in the water:

- A waterfront staff member will immediately enter the water to perform appropriate immobilization of the cervical spine and a rollover if necessary.
    - If the injury occurs at Ski, this would be the driver of the boat (ensure the engine is off before initiating the Red Flag procedure).
    - If the injury occurs at Paddle or Windsports, this would be the first NL-certified responder at the scene (if a boat is used, ensure the engine is off before initiating the Red Flag procedure).
- A support person will initiate the Red Flag Procedure by waving a Red Flag and blasting the air horn for repeated five (5) long blasts.
    - If the injury occurs at Ski, Windsports, or Paddle, this would be the spotter on the boat. If the boat drifts near the scene, the spotter can use a paddle to steer the boat away (doing so in a way that minimizes waves and disruption to the guards).
- The Head of Swim or its designate will switch to Channel 1 and alert all parties about the Red Flag (Directors and Health Centre).
    - If no verbal response, Channel 6 (Health Centre) must be alerted as they will call 9-1-1
    - The Head Specialist is responsible for contacting the rest of the waterfront to close the specialties.
        - The waterfront must be completely cleared to prevent any additional injuries and allow the emergency procedure to proceed safely.

- All walkies involved in the rescue (Swim, Directors, Adam, Health Center, Windsports, etc.) will be turned to Channel 1, and will remain on this channel until the completion of the emergency and the all-clear is given by Adam or Directors.
    - If more senior direction is needed and available, the spinal procedure can be dictated over the walkie-talkie. Communication on Channel 1 should be continuous.
- Arrival of the Swim Staff
    - Depending on where the injury occurs, a Ski boat (not the one that initiated the Red Flag procedure if at Ski) will be responsible for picking up the Swim staff from Northland Enclosure and taking them to the site of the emergency.
    - Three (3) Swim staff will arrive at the scene with a spinal board and will initiate the boarding procedure (see below).
- Once the victim is properly secured to the spinal board, they will be loaded onto the Windsports boat (should already be waiting at the scene of the emergency), and then the victim, along with one Swim staff will be transported to the Health Center dock.
    - The remaining lifeguards will wait at the scene to be picked up by another boat.
- All remaining Swim and Windsports staff will head over to the Health Center dock to assist in bringing the victim to the Health Center.

<u>Camp Northland Middle of the Lake In-Water Spinal Boarding Procedure</u>

Three (3) Swim staff will be required for all Red Flag procedures requiring spinal injury management. Depending on where the emergency occurs, other waterfront staff will be required to perform the initial rollover and provide immediate immobilization before the Swim staff arrive to continue the boarding procedure.
**NOTE*

*Guard 1: Takes over for a staff member who did the initial rollover and acts as primary guard for all communication, does head straps.
*Guard 2: Knifes the board, does the chest and hip straps, holds in vice, etc.
*Guard 3: Holds hips, does feet straps, etc.

1. The first rescuer on the scene (e.g. a Ski staff if this emergency occurs at Ski) will perform initial immobilization and roll the victim over to open the airway if necessary.
2. Guard 3 enters the water and supports the victim's hips to assist with immobilization on the same side of the victim as the staff member who did the rollover.
3. *If the initial immobilization and rollover involved a "vice" hold, then Guard 1 will take control of the victim's head at this time, placing them into a Canadian hold, in order to allow the first responder from Ski to remove their arms from the victim's torso and back. This role at the head should be performed by the most experienced of the 3 Swim staff.
    - *NOTE: Step 3 is optional depending on what technique was used for the initial rollover. If the "Canadian Log Roll" technique was used, then the

transfer of the victim's head is not necessary until after the chest and hip straps are secured.

4. Guard 2 will enter with the spinal board and approach the victim from the opposite side of Guard 3.
5. Guard 2 will knife the board down under the victim. As the board is guided to the surface, all 3 rescuers currently in the water will ensure that it is appropriately aligned with the victim's body.
6. Guard 2 will secure the chest strap, then the hip strap, tightly onto the victim.
    - If assistance is needed in doing the body straps, Guard 3 is able to help, however, they must do so in a way that does not compromise the position and safety of the victim.

7. When both straps are secured, Guard 2 will vice the victim down to the board.
8. When vice is secured, Guard 1 at the head will secure the head straps while Guard 3 secures the foot strap and supports the board from the bottom.
9. Once the head straps are secure, Guard 1 must instruct Guard 2 to let go of vice and support the top of the board. Guards will double-check that straps are tight and the victim is ready to be pushed (don't love this word lol, try transported) onto the boat.
10. All guards in the water will swim with the board to the Windsports boat (as this boat will transport the victim to the Health Center).
11. Guard 1 will climb into the Windsports boat and help lift the board onto the boat while Guards 2 and 3 push the board onto the boat from the water.
12. Once the victim and at least one lifeguard are loaded on the Windsports boat, it quickly proceeds to the Health Center dock, where the rest of the Swim staff should be waiting to help carry the board to the Health Center.

Specialty Specific Roles

Swim Staff

- Three (3) Swim staff will participate in the rescue, each grabbing their own lifejacket and grabbing the equipment designated to their role:
    - Guard 1: Grabbing the first aid kit
    - Guard 2: Grabbing the spinal board
    - Guard 3: other lifesaving equipment from the Swim Shed
- Swim staff wait at the deepest edge of the dock for boat pick-up – they should be wearing life jackets before boarding the boat, as this will make the rescue easier when they arrive at the scene.
- All Swim staff not involved in the rescue should clear all swimmers from the Swim docks and Inflatables area, then quickly proceed to the Health Center dock, where they will help transfer the victim from the dock to the Health Center.

Ski Staff

- Ensure the engine is off before the first rescuer enters the water.
- A different boat (not the boat that initiated the Red Flag procedure) will retrieve the Swim staff from Northland Enclosure dock.
    - The Ski boat will get the spinal board, first aid kit and the supporting Swim staff from the Swim dock and will drive towards the location

of the incident. It is critical to reduce the amount of waves created by the boat as the boat nears the location of the incident.
- The remaining Ski staff clear their area and wait on the dock for the rescue boat to return.

Windsports Staff

- Instruct all sailboats and surfboards to sail into shore immediately.
- The Windsports-assigned boat will arrive at the location of the injury and will cut its engine.
- The Windsports-assigned boat will wait and receive instructions to help with the procedure.
- Any Windsports staff who are not involved with the rescue should begin to clear the Windsports area and make sure all campers are accounted for.

Paddle Staff

- Paddle staff are not involved in a Red Flag procedure unless an injury occurs within the Paddle area. If an injury *does* occur in the Paddle area or the Oblong, staff will immediately sound the air horn, wave the Red Flag, and alert the Head of Swim of the emergency on Channel 3 over the walkie. The first responder will enact a necessary response based on the nature of the injury (i.e., spinal injury - perform immobilization of the spine). Simultaneously, the Head of Swim will then alert the other specialties, the Head Specialist, and the Camp Directors of the Red Flag.
    - Following this, all waterfront specialties will proceed with their specific Red Flag roles:
        - Ski picks up Swim, Swim places the victim on a spinal board and into the Windsports boat, and Windsports, along with one Swim staff, will transport the victim to the Health Center.
- If the injury *does not* occur at Paddle, Paddle staff will remain on call in case additional support is needed. They are also responsible for clearing the Paddle area and ensuring that all campers are accounted for.

PART 2: Injuries at Inflatables

**NOTE*:
*Infla Guard: Lifeguard at the Inflatables dock
*NE Guard: Lifeguard at the Northland Enclosure dock

Overall Procedure

If a suspected spinal injury or other major injury occurs on or in the water at Inflatables:

- NE Guard will immediately enter the water to perform appropriate immobilization of the cervical spine and a rollover if necessary.
    - NE Guard is the first responder unless Infla Guard is directly next to the injury.

        - Infla Guard is in charge of alerting the Head of Swim and the Swim team, as well as clearing the water (see in-depth detail below).
- The Head of Swim or its designate will notify Adam Kertesz and the Directors of the Red Flag via walkie-talkie.
    - Adam Kertesz or the Directors will contact the Health Center directly to notify them of the Red Flag.
    - The Head Specialist is responsible for contacting the rest of the waterfront to close the specialties.
        - The waterfront must be completely cleared to prevent any additional injuries and allow the emergency procedure to proceed safely.
- All walkies involved in the rescue (Swim, Directors, Adam, Health Center, wind-sports, etc.) will be turned to Channel 1, and will remain on this channel until the completion of the emergency and the all-clear is given by Adam or Directors.
    - If more senior direction is needed and available, the spinal procedure can be further dictated over a walkie-talkie. As much as possible, there should be communication providing updates on Channel 1 so all staff members will be aware of what is happening.
- Arrival of the Swim Staff
    - Three (3) Swim staff will arrive at the scene with a spinal board and lifesaving tools, and will initiate the boarding procedure (see below).
- Once the victim is properly secured to the spinal board, depending on where the injury occurred within the Inflatables area, two scenarios can occur (see below).
- All remaining Swim staff and Windsports staff will clear their areas and head over to the Health Center dock to assist in bringing the injured person to the Health Center.

Inflatables Boarding Procedures

1. The NE Guard on the scene will perform initial immobilization and roll the victim over to open the airway if necessary.
    - Infla Guard will only perform the rollover if the incident occurs directly beside them. In such cases, NE Guard is responsible for performing Steps 2 and 3.

2. Infla Guard will blast the air horn for five (5) long blasts to get the attention of the Head of Swim and the Swim team. These blasts will continue until the three (3) Swim staff are on the scene with the spinal board, life jackets and first aid kit.
3. While Infla Guard is signalling the start of the Red Flag procedure, they should also be clearing the rest of the campers out of the Inflatables area (water and land). No person should leave the Inflatables specialty until they are properly signed out of the water.
4. When the three (3) Swim staff arrive on the scene, Guard 3 will support the victim's hips to assist with immobilization on the same side as the Inflatables staff who did the rollover.
5. *If the initial immobilization and rollover involved a "vice" hold, then Guard 1 will take control of the victim's head at this time, placing them into a Canadian hold, in order to allow the first responder from Ski to remove their arms from the victim's torso and

back. This role at the head should be performed by the most experienced of the 3 Swim staff.

- *NOTE Step 5 is optional depending on what technique was used for the initial rollover. If the “Canadian Log Roll” technique was used, then transfer of the victim’s head is not necessary until after the chest and hip straps are secured.

6. Once Guard 1 has the victim secured in Canadian, Inflatables staff can let go of vice and help where directed.
7. Guard 2 will enter with the spinal board and approach the victim from the opposite side of Guard 3.
8. Guard 2 will knife the board down under the victim. As the board is guided to the surface, all 3 rescuers currently in the water will ensure that it is appropriately aligned with the victim’s body.
9. Guards 2 will secure the chest strap, then the hip strap tightly on the victim.
    - If assistance is needed in doing the body straps, Guard 3 is able to help, however, they must do so in a way that does not compromise the position and safety of the victim.
10. When both straps are secured, Guard 2 will vice the victim down to the board.
11. When the vice is secured, Guard 1 at the head will secure the head straps while Guard 3 secures the foot strap and supports the board from the bottom.
12. Once the head straps are secured, Guard 1 must instruct Guard 2 to release the vice hold and transition to supporting the top of the board. All guards will then double-check that all straps are secure and confirm that the victim is stabilized and ready to be moved beyond the lane rope boundary, either to be loaded onto the boat or lifted onto the dock (transported via golf cart).

- * There are 2 possible scenarios for appropriate removal of the victim, depending on the exact location of the victim at Inflatables, and the relative efficiency of the rescue procedure.

Removal Scenarios

NOTE: Windsports staff must always respond to a Red Flag at Inflatables. While their boat may not always be used for transport, it is essential that they arrive at the scene to provide support as needed. Additionally, the Swim staff are required to move the spinal board beyond the lane rope boundary in all cases in the event that the Windsports boat is needed as a backup transportation option.

Loaded onto the Windsports Boat (primary scenario)

- Once the injured person is secured onto the spinal board, the Swim staff will move the board beyond the lane rope boundary and transfer the victim onto the

Windsports boat. One Swim staff member will accompany the victim during transportation.

- All remaining Swim staff will report to the health centre dock to assist with transferring the victim from the boat to the Health Centre dock where medical team will assess the victim and take over.

Where appropriate, all waterfront specialties must close their specialties. Swim staff and Windsports staff should proceed to the Health Center to assist in transferring the injured person to the Health Center.

Post-Emergency Follow Up
Land and Water Spinal Emergency Follow-up

- NOTE: Accident reports must be completed and submitted to the Camp Director (Adam Kertesz)
- There will be follow-up sessions for all those who were involved in the Emergency procedure occurring in the Health Center, with a member of the Health Center present. There will be individual checks as well as a group debrief on the situation and reaction to create a discussion about preventive measures for the future.

Follow-Up Group Questions

Below are guiding questions. Others can be asked at the discretion of the person leading the follow-up.

- What went well? What didn't? Why?
- What was everyone's role in the procedure?
- What was supposed to happen? What happened? What didn't happen? Why was there a difference between what was supposed to happen and what did?
- What were the strengths of the team?
- What were the weaknesses of the team?
- Is there something that we could do differently next time to make this process better?