



2021 Public Safety Scuba Instructor Standards

General Training Standards

- 1.____The most current version of the Public Safety Diving (PSD) Training Standards, PSSSI Training Manual, workbook, and other PSD printed materials, plus various audio-visual materials are to be used for PSD training programs. Whenever there is a disparity between any of these materials, the most current version of PSD Training Standards take precedence. If in doubt, contact Dive Rescue International for guidance or interpretations.
- 2.____If a Public Safety Scuba Instructor (PSSSI) needs to deviate from the PSD Training Standards, a written request sent to headquarters is required well in advance of the needed deviation. The request explains the reason for the deviation and the planned procedures to assure student safety.
- 3.____Each student is to complete the Liability Release and Statement of Understanding prior to any in-water training. Requests to change these documents should be submitted, in writing, for approval by Dive Rescue International.
- 4.____Each student is to complete a Student Medical History Questionnaire (or other medical form approved by Dive Rescue International) prior to in-water training. If the Student Medical History Questionnaire or the appearance/behavior of the student indicates any condition contrary to safe participation in water activities, the student is then required to secure medical approval by a licensed physician prior to any in-water training.
- 5.____Records used for monitoring and evaluating each student's progress, skills, and knowledge shall be maintained and retained for seven years by the certifying PSSSI. The Liability Release, Statement of Understanding, and Student Medical History Questionnaire or other approved Medical Statement are also retained for seven years. Completed Public Safety Diver certification materials (Student Photo, Class Roster, and Emergency Action Plan) will be forwarded to Dive Rescue International within 30 days of class.
- 6.____The ratio of students to PSSSIs for the classroom session and pool activities is set by the individual Instructor, based on the ability of the Instructor to deal effectively with student needs.
- 7.____During open water training activities, the in-water student to PSSSI ratio is 6 to 1 for skin diving, 2 to 1 for the first two experiences with SCUBA, and 4 to 1 for subsequent experiences using SCUBA. The maximum number of students per qualified assistant is two. The PSSSI is to decrease the students to instructor ratio when conditions dictate.
- 8.____PSSSIs have an obligation to cancel or modify training when environmental conditions, students' physical or mental conditions, or equipment difficulties make cancellation or modification advisable. This is a value judgment that can only be made by the PSSSI at the time and place of the training.
- 9.____PSSSIs are not to make changes in the PSD training program material or skills that would prevent students from successfully completing the program. PSSSIs may exceed PSD Standards, may provide more complete coverage of the materials, may provide additional pool or open water diving time, and may modify text material to meet local conditions. All modifications must be submitted in writing to Dive Rescue International for approval.
- 10.____PSD training is restricted to members of public safety agencies, government agencies, recognized SAR teams or recognized Public Safety Dive teams. Recognized teams are those organizations who would normally work under the direction of a governmental agency.

11. ___The minimum age for participation in the PSD program is 18 years old.

12. ___All PSD students are to have and use dive log books for all training classes. The Instructor and student are both to sign each log entry when completed.

13. ___PSSIs are to insist that their students inform them if they are excessively cold, tired, injured, or not feeling well. Instructors are not to encourage students to participate if they have been ill. Nausea in a diver should be handled with extreme caution. Canceling a planned training operation in this situation may be the best decision.

14. ___All on-scene personnel are required to inform the PSSI of all equipment difficulties and malfunctions. Minimum cylinder air supply cannot be less than 1000 PSI at any time during the dive. Students and qualified assistants will be instructed by the PSSI to inform the Instructor of any low air situations.

15. ___PSSIs are not to force students to do skills during open water dives. If a student verbally or by behavior indicates a desire not to do a skill, the Instructor complies. PSSIs are not to harass the students at any time. The Instructor may come back to the incomplete skill later in the dive or on another dive. If the skill is required for certification and has not been completed by the end of the course, the student may come to the next course or the student may be provided private instruction.

16. ___A certified and current PSSI working under the authority of his sponsoring agency is to be present and supervise all PSD training activities. Other agency instructors, if current and insured, may be used as assistants but cannot replace the PSSI.

17. ___Students are to demonstrate effective watermanship and basic SCUBA skills in a pool setting or suitable open water site. As a minimum, the following skills are to be performed prior to any Dive Rescue International Open Water training:

- The diver must successfully complete the most current version of the IADRS Watermanship Test which can be downloaded at IADRS.org. This test includes a 500 yard swim, a 15 minute tread, and 800 yard snorkel swim, a 100 yard inert rescue tow and a free dive to a depth of at least nine feet to retrieve an object.
- Effectively complete all pool skills prior to any open water training.
- Move through the water and breathe effectively in a relaxed and comfortable manner.
- Effectively handle equipment, in and out of the water; before, during, and after the dive.

18. ___If a pool is not available for training, the PSSI may select an appropriate open water site to conduct this portion of the program. This open water site provides swimming-pool-like conditions with respect to clarity, calmness, and depth.

19. ___Night diving is included in the curriculum of the PSD course. Night dives are not to be made in limited visibility, heavy surf, in water deeper than forty feet, or in strong currents. If it is not reasonable or safe to conduct a night dive, even though the curriculum calls for such a dive, then another dive combining both underwater activities and a skills review is to be done in place of the night dive.

20. ___During all SCUBA training, each student and Instructor are to be equipped with at least: mask, snorkel, fins, buoyancy compensator with oral or low pressure inflator, tank, regulator with alternate air source, an emergency signaling device, two cutting tools, submersible pressure gauge, timing device, depth gauge, an environmental protection suit, gloves, weight and weight system (belt or integrated system) and SCUBA cylinders having current visual and hydrostatic inspection dates. Students should be encouraged to use their own equipment and should demonstrate adequate comfort with all equipment prior to any open water exercise. In the open water environment, students should never use unfamiliar equipment. On every dive the PSSI or qualified assistant shall verify each student's safety check prior to the student entering the water.

21. ___ Open water is any body of water other than a swimming pool. During PSD training, the open water sites will be realistic of local conditions with diver safety being a primary consideration.

22. ___ The depth of open water training during a PSD course is not to exceed 40 feet. Open water SCUBA dives are to expose students to depths of at least 15 feet.

23. ___ Any ascent training done during open water SCUBA dives simulating any emergency condition is to be done from a maximum depth of 30 feet.

24. ___ The number of open water SCUBA dives per day is not to exceed two.

25. ___ Open water dives that are made to meet the minimum number of dives for certification are to be separate experiences, including an entry and exit from the water and putting on and taking off SCUBA equipment. Each dive is to be of at least 15 minutes in duration. Protective suits do not need to be removed between dives. All dives EXCEPT the night dives will be conducted in daylight hours.

26. ___ When setting the proper student to Instructor ratio, number of dives per day, depth of training dives, how close students are to stay to the PSSI, whether or not to make a dive, or dive site selection, the following should be taken into account:

- Water conditions-movement, temperature, visibility and depth
- Experience of the Instructor
- Experience of the students
- Number of qualified assistants or other PSSIs
- Emergency support available
- The type of equipment in use
- Weather conditions
- Degree of control by the Instructor
- Dive site suitability and accessibility
- Suitability of terrain

27. ___ The in-water student to Instructor ratio is 6 to 1 for skin diving, 2 to 1 for the first two experiences with SCUBA, and 4 to 1 for subsequent experiences using SCUBA. Whenever possible, qualified assistants, such as certified Public Safety SCUBA Instructors, should be used during training. The PSSI is to decrease the in-water student to Instructor ratio whenever environmental conditions, individual student needs, or equipment considerations dictate.

28. ___ During open water skin dives, students are to remain in the general vicinity of and within sight of an Instructor. During the first two open water SCUBA dives, students are to remain in the immediate vicinity of a PSSI so that physical contact can be made at any time. During the next three open water SCUBA dives (the third, fourth, and fifth experiences on SCUBA in open water), students are to remain under the direct supervision of a PSSI. During subsequent SCUBA diving experiences, the PSSI is to be present and in control of the diving activities, but students are not required to stay with the Instructor. PSSIs may retain closer control of students than course standards require, but PSSIs should not lose sight of their obligation to train divers who can take responsibility for themselves and dive independently of an Instructor.

29. ___ If the entire PSD course is conducted in open water (no pool is used), then the number of open water dives is to be increased. The number and types of additional dives are left to the Instructor's judgment based on environmental conditions, the equipment used, and student needs.

30. ___ Open water SCUBA diving training is to be conducted so the students have a clear and unrestricted access to the surface at all times. This requirement, therefore, bars open water PSD training dives that involve penetration into caves, wrecks, or under the ice. Vegetation in the water may be considered when selecting a dive site but would not constitute an overhead environment as this may be realistic of local conditions.

31.____Each PSSSI conducting in-water training is to have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for diving accidents. The EAP is to include emergency guidelines, provisions for on-site communications, provisions for transportation, and emergency contact information. Emergency equipment that is to be available at the site includes an AED (or other defibrillator), first aid kit, oxygen unit, surface float, and communications equipment. This equipment may be supplied by the Instructor, agency, or by other means. The EAP must be turned in to Dive Rescue International with each class roster.

32.____The Instructor maintains both medical and physical fitness while teaching the PSD course. The IADRS Watermanship Test and SCUBA Skills Review should be completed annually but is required to be completed within 12 months of the PSSSI recertification. Additionally, a Medical Statement must be signed by a physician within 12 months of the PSSSI recertification.

33.____A surface float capable of supporting a distressed diver is required to be within 200 feet of the diver's location. When appropriate, the float(s) can also display the diver down flag or a sign to warn others that divers are operating in the area.

34.____All students are required to satisfactorily participate in a minimum of six open water dives (one skin dive and five SCUBA dives) and must score at least an 85% on the final exam to qualify for PSD certification. If the student does not successfully complete the exam with a passing score, the student may re-take the exam once the trainer feels as though the student better understands the material. The student must re-take the entire exam. There is not a set amount of time that is required between the original exam and the re-take exam. Reasonable accommodations may be made for students with learning or reading challenges. These accommodations may include additional time to complete the exam, or administering the exam verbally.

35.____The PSSSIs need to be sure that each student has the required skills and knowledge before a certificate is issued. There are no required minimum program hours for the PSD program. Actual time needed will vary depending on the number of students, their skills, environmental conditions, and program logistics. The recommended hours for a PSD program are 24 - 48.

36.____The PSSSI teaches the PSD program in compliance with the latest version of the PSD Training Standards and Instructor Manual. Updated Training Standards and Instructor Manual revisions are released on an annual basis and the PSSSI is responsible for inserting the revisions in the Instructor Manual and destroying outdated material. To facilitate the exchange of information, the Instructor provides Dive Rescue International with an e-mail address and physical mailing address. Additionally, the Instructor notifies Dive Rescue International of an address change within 30 days.

37.____If the PSSSI becomes aware of any act, error, or omission which might lead to a claim or suit, or if a claim or suit is brought, Dive Rescue International is to be notified immediately.

Crossover Testing Standards

1.____ The intent of the Crossover Diver Testing Standard is to provide a safe and effective way for experienced divers to become qualified PSDs. These divers must have either certification from other recognized diver training organizations or documented training in commercial, military, or scientific diving.

2. ____ To be eligible for the Crossover Diver Test, divers must be at least eighteen years old and have a total of at least 32 hours of dive experience and or training. If this requirement is not met the diver should take a complete PSD course.

3. ____ All current PSSSI General Training Standards apply to the Crossover Diver Test. Those standards are to be reviewed before conducting the Crossover Diver Test to be sure that all requirements are met.

Public Safety Scuba Instructor Signature

4. ____ The Crossover Diver Test consists of:

Print Name

- PSD final exam, prior to open water scuba training.
- Successful completion of the current version of the IADRS Watermanship Test.
- At least one open water skin dive (this may be combined with the scuba dives).
- At least two open water scuba dives performed under direct supervision
- Satisfactory performance of PSD open water skills is required for PSD Certification

Date

5. ____ If any areas of weakness are indicated during the Crossover Diver Test, then a review is to be conducted using audio-visuals, lecture/discussion, and/or in-water practice.

6. ____ As a minimum, the following skills are to be performed during the scuba skill evaluation:

- Move through the water and breathe effectively in a relaxed and comfortable manner, effectively control buoyancy on the bottom, in mid-water, at the surface, and during ascents, and descents
- Effectively clear both regulator and mask
- Remove and replace scuba equipment underwater
- Effectively share air both on the bottom and during an ascent
- Plan a dive and effectively work with a buddy
- Make an emergency buoyant ascent
- Effectively handle equipment, in and out of the water, before, during, and after the dive

7. ____ When the PSD Final exam, IADRS Watermanship Test, open water dives, and open water skills are satisfactorily completed and the certification requirements in the current version of the PSSSI General Training Standards have been met, the PSD Certification may be issued.



2021 Public Safety Scuba Instructor Agreement

This Agreement, made and entered into, this _____ day of _____, 20____,
(day) (month) (year)
by and between Dive Rescue International, Inc., hereinafter referred to as Dive Rescue
International, and _____ hereinafter referred to as the “Instructor.”
(Instructor name - please print)

WITNESSETH THAT:

For and in consideration of Dive Rescue International certifying or renewing the Instructor, the Instructor agrees to abide by the following provisions and requirements:

1. _____The Instructor agrees to abide by standards and agreements established and put forth by Dive Rescue International at this time, and such standards and agreements that are established and put forth by Dive Rescue International at any time in the future.
2. _____The Instructor agrees to follow the Public Safety Scuba Instructor (PSSI) Training System, including but not limited to, the Public Safety Scuba Instructor Manual, the Instructor also agrees to use the PSSI Training System for the teaching of the PSD program and shall not copy, reproduce, or disseminate the system or its contents. Only certified PSSI Instructors are allowed use of the PSSI Training System.
3. _____The Instructor understands that the Public Safety Scuba Instructor certification is granted only to members of public safety agencies and agrees to maintain his/her membership within a sponsoring public safety department.
4. _____The Instructor agrees that while acting as a Public Safety Scuba Instructor, to act only in such a manner as will bring credit to the Instructor, their department, and to Dive Rescue International.
5. _____The Instructor agrees to maintain any and all such records as are required by Dive Rescue International.
6. _____The Instructor agrees to provide access to such records as requested by Dive Rescue International or the insurance company representing Dive Rescue International.
7. _____The Public Safety Scuba Instructor teaches the Public Safety Diver program in compliance with the latest version of the Public Safety Scuba Instructor Training Standards and Instructor Manual. Updated Training Standards and Instructor Manual revisions are released on an annual basis and the Public Safety Scuba Instructor is responsible for inserting the revisions in the Instructor Manual and destroying outdated material. To facilitate the exchange of information, the Instructor provides Dive Rescue International with an Email address and physical mailing address. Additionally, the Instructor notifies Dive Rescue International of an address change within 30 days.

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8. _____The Instructor agrees to comply with the recertification procedures as stipulated by Dive Rescue International.
 9. _____The Instructor understands that he/she is not an agent, employee, or legal representative of Dive Rescue International and has no authority to bind Dive Rescue International in any manner.
 10. _____Because Dive Rescue International is unable to directly monitor the training process, teaching practices, or the activities of their Instructors, it is clearly understood that Certificates of Training and all other materials are issued by Dive Rescue International to Instructors as a service. It is the sole responsibility of the Instructor to assure that every person who receives a Public Safety Diver certification meets all criteria as established in the published Public Safety Diver Training Standards. The Instructor further agrees not to issue certification to any person who in any way fails to meet the intent as well as the letter of standards.
 11. _____The Instructor agrees to maintain certification/proficiency in CPR and First Aid.
 12. _____The Instructor must be a current Public Safety Scuba Instructor in good standing with Dive Rescue International.
 13. _____The Instructor agrees to provide at certification, and at every recertification, a letter from his/her respective department stating on department letterhead, that they are sponsored by the department and that liability insurance coverage is provided through the department while working within his/her scope of employment for said department.
 14. _____The Instructor agrees to teach the PSD program only to members of their sponsoring public safety agency. Teaching outside the sponsoring agency requires a specific written waiver from Dive Rescue International.
 15. _____The Instructor agrees to promptly and immediately report to Dive Rescue International all accidents or incidents of any nature for the purpose of statistical data and future accident prevention measures.

The Instructor agrees and understands that if he/she fails to meet any of the above provisions, standards or agreements, his/her status as a Instructor is subject to immediate revocation, at the discretion of Dive Rescue International personnel.

The undersigned state that they have read the foregoing and understand all terms, conditions, and provisions therein as indicated by their signatures hereon below.

Dive Rescue International, Inc.

By: _____
Dive Rescue International Representative

By: _____
Instructor



Dive Rescue International PSSI Audio-Visual System Agreement

This agreement is entered into on _____, 20____ by and between Dive Rescue International, Inc. 201 North Link Lane, Fort Collins, CO 80524-2712 (Dive Rescue International) and _____ (Instructor-Trainer).

In consideration of the mutual promises contained in this Agreement and for other valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which is acknowledged, the parties agree as follows:

____ 1. ***Audio-Visual System Use***

Dive Rescue International has compiled an audio-visual system of print and digital media for use by its Instructor-Trainers in Dive Rescue International's training programs. This print and digital media, currently constituting Dive Rescue International's audio-visual system, together with any other components of Dive Rescue International's audio-visual system as it may be constituted in the future, are referred to in this Agreement as the "System." Dive Rescue International grants Instructor-Trainer the right to use the System under the terms of this Agreement in conducting such Dive Rescue International training programs as may be authorized by Dive Rescue International. Without the express written consent of Dive Rescue International, Instructor-Trainer shall not make any use of this System other than in conducting the referenced Dive Rescue International training programs and shall not copy, reproduce or disseminate the System or its contents.

____ 2. ***Proprietary Rights***

The System is proprietary to Dive Rescue International and any unauthorized use of the System will cause irreparable harm and loss to Dive Rescue International. By this Agreement, Dive Rescue International grants no rights to Instructor-Trainer under any copyrights or trade names associated with the System. Any use of the System by Instructor-Trainer insures to the benefit of Dive Rescue International.

____ 3. ***Assignment***

Instructor-Trainer's right to use the System is personal to Instructor-Trainer and Instructor-Trainer shall not transfer or assign this Agreement or any rights under this Agreement, without the prior written consent of Dive Rescue International.

____ 4. ***Breach of Agreement***

If Instructor-Trainer breaches any provision of this Agreement, Dive Rescue International may, in its sole and absolute discretion, immediately revoke all Dive Rescue International certifications held by Instructor-Trainer and in adoption, may assert against Instructor-Trainer all available legal and equitable remedies and shall be entitled to all costs and attorney fees incurred in doing so. Instructor-Trainer also agrees to indemnify and hold Dive Rescue International harmless against all liability, loss or damage, including attorney fees, which Dive Rescue International may suffer as a result of claims, demands, costs or judgments against it arising directly or indirectly from Instructor-Trainer's performance or nonperformance of this Agreement.

____ 5. ***Termination***

Dive Rescue International reserves the right to terminate this Agreement at any time, for any reason upon thirty (30) days written notice to the Instructor-Trainer. On termination, should the Instructor-Trainer then have the System in the Instructor-Trainer's possession, Instructor-Trainer shall immediately return the System to Dive Rescue International as provided in Section 1 above.

____ 6. ***General Provisions***

- **Waiver of Breach:** No waiver of any breach of this Agreement shall constitute a waiver or any other or subsequent breach.
- **Entire Agreement:** This instrument reflects the entire Agreement between the parties and it cannot be modified except in writing.
- **Binding Effect:** This Agreement shall be binding upon and insure to the benefit of the parties, their successors, assigns and legal representation.

Dive Rescue Representative

Instructor