

By Senator Torres

25-00057-24

20241538__

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to water safety; creating s. 258.018,
3 F.S.; requiring state parks to have a certified
4 lifeguard on duty at designated swimming areas within
5 the park during certain timeframes; requiring the
6 Department of Environmental Protection to install a
7 water rescue station at each designated swimming area;
8 defining the term "water rescue station"; requiring
9 that police vehicles be equipped with a rescue buoy;
10 requiring that the staffing for each shift at a fire
11 station include at least one firefighter who is
12 certified in rescue diving; providing an effective
13 date.

14
15 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

16
17 Section 1. Section 258.018, Florida Statutes, is created to
18 read:

19 258.018 State park designated swimming areas; lifeguards
20 and rescue equipment required; emergency responder
21 requirements.—

22 (1) A state park must have a lifeguard certified pursuant
23 to s. 514.071 on duty at any designated swimming area within the
24 park during all of the following timeframes:

25 (a) A state holiday, if the area is open to the public
26 during such time.

27 (b) Times of historical peak usage, as determined by the
28 Division of Recreation and Parks.

29 (2) The Department of Environmental Protection shall

25-00057-24

20241538__

30 install a water rescue station at any designated swimming area
31 within a state park. As used in this subsection, the term "water
32 rescue station" means a freestanding or wall-mounted life ring
33 that a bystander may use to help a person who is in distress in
34 the water.

35 (3) Police vehicles must be equipped with a rescue buoy,
36 such as a life ring or similar device, for a water safety
37 incident.

38 (4) The staffing for each shift at a fire station must
39 include at least one firefighter who is certified in rescue
40 diving and who is not a captain or battalion chief, so that in
41 the event of an incident when a diver is needed, the captain or
42 battalion chief may direct the staff's response.

43 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.