



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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Memorandum

From: Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Date: June 9, 2020
Subject: Boating & Various Other Marine and Inland Waterway Related Activities – Phase II

The following guidelines for boating and various other marine and inland waterway related activities supersede and replace guidelines issued by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs on May 18, 2020. These guidelines remain in effect until rescinded.

This guidance should apply until amended or rescinded. Any questions regarding this guidance can be sent to outdoor.recreation@mass.gov

General Guidelines

Face Coverings and Masks: Consistent with [COVID-19 Order 31: Order Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places Where Social Distancing is Not Possible](#), which requires persons to wear face coverings while in public places to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and the Safer at Home Advisory issued by the Department of Public Health issued on May 18, 2020, all persons over the age of two must wear a face covering when they attend outdoor gatherings if the circumstances of the gathering could limit their ability to maintain at least six feet of distance from others, unless they are prevented from wearing a face covering by a medical or disabling condition. All persons are likewise advised to avoid close personal contact to prevent spreading the virus.

Group Size: No groups larger than 10 are allowed to gather: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/march-31-2020-assemblage-guidance/download>

Inland Boat Ramps and Canoe Launches:

- ❖ Inland boat ramps and canoe launches within state parks, forests, wildlife management areas, boating access facilities and other state-owned properties managed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts remain open to all users, except where the access has already been closed due to parking restrictions or other restrictions.
- ❖ All other inland boat ramps that are currently managed by municipalities remain open subject to the discretion of the city or town.

User Guidelines:

- ❖ Ramps remain open subject to available parking. A ramp will be considered closed if all parking is full. Illegally parked cars will be ticketed and may be towed.
- ❖ All boat ramp and canoe launch users shall practice social distancing. Users should allow appropriate space for users of the boat ramp or launch and clear the ramp when users launch is complete.
- ❖ Users should ensure they are ready to depart quickly from the ramp or dock as soon as their boat is put into the water. Users not actively launching their boat should clear the launch area.
- ❖ Upon return to ramp, users should load their boat as quickly as safely possible and then clear the launch area.
- ❖ Use of ramps for organized fishing tournaments, derbies, or any other type of gathering are prohibited, unless such tournament or derby is remote/virtual and follows the following guidelines:
 - Tournament/Derby organizer(s) formulates a virtual plan for fish measuring and price allocation (includes online registration, catch entries, and awards).
 - Weigh ins conducted virtually or if in-person, then outdoors and maintaining social distancing and group size limits.
 - No gatherings of more than 10 people are allowed at any time before, during or after.
 - All participants must provide their own gear.
 - Shore anglers must adhere to all social distancing guidelines. The use of multiple water bodies to appropriately distance individuals is strongly encouraged.
- ❖ Loitering on ramps or in parking areas or use of ramps for any activity other than launching boats is prohibited. Parking at ramps for activities other than launching boats is prohibited.
- ❖ Face coverings are required for all workers and customers in accordance with Covid-19 Order 31: [*Order Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places Where Social Distancing is Not Possible*](#) to prevent against the transmission of Covid-19.

Coastal Boat Ramps:

- ❖ For commercial, state and municipal uses, coastal boat ramps will remain open to all users.
- ❖ For recreational use, coastal boat ramps managed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts remain open to all users.
- ❖ All other coastal boat ramps currently managed by municipalities remain open to all users for recreational use subject to the discretion of the city or town.

User Guidelines:

- ❖ Coastal boat ramp parking lots are open for users launching boats, canoes and kayaks, and associated parking. Parking for the purpose of accessing coastal beaches is prohibited.
- ❖ All boat ramp and canoe launch users shall practice social distancing. Users should allow appropriate space for users of the boat ramp or launch and clear the ramp immediately when their launch is complete.
- ❖ Users should ensure they are ready to depart quickly from the ramp or dock as soon as their boat is put into the water. Users not actively launching their boat should clear the launch area.
- ❖ Upon return to ramp, users should load their boat as quickly as safely possible and then clear the launch area.
- ❖ Use of ramps for organized fishing tournaments, derbies, or any other type of gathering is prohibited, unless the guidance indicated above is followed.
- ❖ Loitering on ramps or in parking area or use of ramps for any activity other than launching boats is prohibited. Parking at ramps for activities other than launching boats is prohibited.
- ❖ Face coverings are required for all workers and customers in accordance with Covid-19 Order 31: *Order Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places Where Social Distancing is Not Possible* to prevent against the transmission of Covid-19.

Recreational boating:

The safe operation of recreational boats is permitted under the following guidelines:

- ❖ No more than 10 people may be in a boat at one time and social distancing guidelines must be followed

- ❖ All users while on boat ramps, docks, piers etc., shall follow social distancing.
- ❖ All recreational crafts shall remain a safe distance apart. Tying boats or other crafts together is prohibited.
- ❖ All recreational boating is subject to the discretion of local officials, harbor masters, and law enforcement.
- ❖ All local rules, regulations, laws and Coast Guard requirements still apply.

Commercial Boating:

The safe operation of commercial boats is permitted under the following guidelines:

- ❖ Maritime transportation workers, including dredgers, port workers, mariners, ship crewmembers, ship pilots and tugboat operators, equipment operators (to include maintenance and repair, and maritime-specific medical providers), ship supply, chandler, and repair companies have all been deemed essential services under the Governor's orders.
- ❖ Commercial fishing is an essential part of the food supply chain and will continue to be allowed. Workers should follow public health guidance to minimize interactions with each other and the public.
- ❖ All local rules, regulations, laws and Coast Guard requirements still apply.