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Memorandum

From: Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Date: Amended August 18, 2020
Subject: Boating & Various Other Marine and Inland Waterway Related Activities – Phase III, Step 1

The following guidelines apply to Boating & Various Other Marine and Inland Waterway Related Activities during Phase III, Step 1 of the Commonwealth's Reopening.

Those individuals partaking in boating and marine and inland waterway related activities should abide by the specific guidelines outline herein. All activities should comply with gatherings guidance and all users should comply 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- and adhere to all relevant federal, state, and local laws.

This guidance should apply until amended or rescinded.

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 in-person fishing tournaments, derbies, or any other type of competition should comply with the tournament requirements in [*Workplace Safety and Reopening Standards for Businesses and Other Entities Providing Youth and Adult Amateur Sports Activities*](#). All events must also comply with any additional local restrictions.
- ❖ Virtual/remote tournament/derbies may continue to proceed in Phase III as follows:
 - 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.
 - 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.
 - All events must comply with any additional local restrictions.
- ❖ 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 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 competition should follow the guidance as indicated above.
- ❖ 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:

- ❖ All users while on boat ramps, docks, piers etc., shall follow social distancing.
- ❖ Rafting-up or tying-up of boats is limited to no more than 3 vessels.
- ❖ All recreational boating is subject to the discretion of local officials, harbormasters, 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.