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Memorandum

From: Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Date: March 22, 2021
Subject: Boating & Various Other Marine and Inland Waterway Related Activities – Phase IV, Step 1

The following guidelines apply to Boating & Various Other Marine and Inland Waterway Related Activities during Phase IV, 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.

Users should comply with COVID-19 Order 55: [Revised Order Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places](#) to prevent against the transmission of COVID-19.

This guidance should apply until amended or rescinded.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. The use of multiple bodies of water to appropriately distance individuals while competing is strongly encouraged.
- ❖ It is recommended that virtual/remote tournament/derbies continue to be utilized to the greatest extent possible including:
 - Virtual plan for fish measuring and price allocation (includes online registration, catch entries, and awards).
 - Virtual weigh ins or if in-person, then outdoors and maintaining social distancing and group size limits.
- ❖ 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.

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.

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, 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.