



MASSACHUSETTS EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

WORKPLACE SAFETY and REOPENING STANDARDS FOR BUSINESSES PROVIDING WHITE WATER RAFTING ACTIVITIES

May 18, 2020

INTRODUCTION

On May 18, 2020, Governor Baker issued *COVID-19 Order No. 33: Order Implementing a Phased Reopening of Workplaces and Imposing Workplace Safety Measures to Address COVID-19*, implementing a phased reopening of workplaces and imposing workplace safety measures to address COVID-19. That same day, he issued *COVID-19 Order No. 34: Order Expanding Access to and Use of State Beaches and Addressing Other Outdoor Recreational Activities*, which directed the Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs “to issue guidance for the implementation of the generally applicable COVID-19 workplace standards by operators of and participants in outdoor recreational activities.”

This document provides guidance for businesses providing white water rafting activities on how to implement those general workplace safety standards and other public health guidance (“COVID-19 measures”) in the context of their outdoor recreational operations in the first phase (“Phase 1”) of the Commonwealth’s reopening. Operators who fail to implement applicable COVID-19 measures may be sanctioned in accordance with COVID-19 Order No. 33. Operators are further reminded that in addition to implementing COVID-19 measures in Phase 1, they must still comply with all federal, state and local laws.

The public health data and guidance on which this document is based can and does change frequently. The most recent version of this document can be found on the Commonwealth’s website, <http://www.mass.gov/>

Any questions regarding this guidance can be sent to outdoor.recreation@mass.gov

LIMITATIONS ON OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES

COVID-19 Order No. 33 permits certain outdoor recreational activities and facilities to resume operations on May 25, 2020, provided that those operations meet safety standards and comply with the terms and conditions of the Order.

The Order provides that businesses providing white water rafting may often in Phase 1; provided, however, that the occupants of a raft or kayak be limited to a single household group.

In addition to complying with the aforementioned limitations, operators must implement the following safety measures detailed below.



IMPLEMENTING SAFETY MEASURES FOR YOUR OPERATION

COVID-19 Order No. 33 organizes safety measures into four distinct categories, social distancing, hygiene protocols, staffing and operations, and cleaning and disinfecting. White water rafting operators must ensure that the following COVID-19 Measures to protect consumers and employees.

Social Distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All persons, including employees, customers, and vendors should remain at least six feet apart to the greatest extent possible, both inside and outside workplaces • Establish protocols to ensure that employees can practice adequate social distancing • Provide signage for safe social distancing • Require face coverings or masks for all employees and customers
Hygiene Protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide hand-washing capabilities throughout the workplace • Ensure frequent hand washing by employees and adequate supplies to do so • Provide regular sanitization of high touch areas, such as workstations, equipment, screens, doorknobs, restrooms throughout work site
Staffing and Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training for employees regarding the social distancing and hygiene protocols • Employees who are displaying COVID-19-like symptoms do not report to work • Establish a plan for employees getting ill from COVID-19 at work, and a return-to-work plan
Cleaning and Disinfecting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain cleaning protocols specific to the business • When an active employee is diagnosed with COVID-19, cleaning and disinfecting must be performed • Disinfection of all common surfaces must take place at intervals appropriate to said workplace

The application of these measures for businesses providing outdoor recreational experiences and education is detailed below.

I. Social Distancing

- ❖ Outfitters are encouraged to use online registration and online waivers. If online registration is not possible, social distancing guidelines must be used
- ❖ Where possible, delineated on-site parking shall be made available in accordance with social distancing guidelines
- ❖ Businesses shall establish pedestrian traffic flows to maintain space for social distancing, including delineated 6-foot minimum markings in queues
- ❖ Stagger lunch and break times, regulating maximum number of people in one place and ensuring at least 6 feet of physical distancing during any meeting



- ❖ Face coverings are required for all workers, except where doing so may introduce a safety hazard to workers or where an individual is unable to wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability
- ❖ Minimize the use of confined spaces (e.g., check-in offices, vehicles) by more than one individual at a time; all employees in such spaces at the same time are required to wear face coverings

II. Hygiene Protocols

- ❖ Hand hygiene, either handwashing or alcohol-based hand sanitizers must be used at the beginning and end of all activities
- ❖ Raft and kayak guides must wear a mask and maintain social distancing between rafts and kayaks
- ❖ Masks shall be made available for guests and should be used when social distancing from guide is not possible
- ❖ Ensure access to handwashing facilities on site, including soap and running water, and allow sufficient break time for employees to wash hands to frequently; alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used as an alternative
- ❖ Supply employees at workplace location with adequate cleaning products (e.g., sanitizer, disinfecting wipes)
- ❖ Require regular and not less than daily cleaning and sanitation of all high-touch areas such as workstations, door handles, and restrooms
- ❖ Post visible signage throughout the site to remind employees on the hygiene and safety protocols

III. Staffing and Operations

- ❖ Registration and booking shall be restricted to reserved household units - each group to be assigned a private raft or kayak with a guide and operators will ensure no mixing between groups
- ❖ Operators shall stagger start and guest arrival times to ensure each trip has left the check-in location before next trip arrives for registration
- ❖ Operators must ensure that on-site guest and staff density is maintained to allow for social distancing
- ❖ Informational Trip Talk video/speech shall be delivered to small custom trips according to social distancing and group size guidelines
- ❖ Businesses shall establish traffic patterns and limit capacity to maintain social distancing for restrooms and facilities.
- ❖ Outfitting area shall have established traffic flow ensuring one household unit at a time
- ❖ Staff member(s) shall explain and demonstrate how guests should fit their own PFD and helmet (if required) and explain how to assist a family member in helping one another
- ❖ If a guest needs a staff member to assist with gear, the staff member will physically assist wearing a mask and optional eye protection



- ❖ Transportation is limited to household groups (1 reservation) plus a driver
- ❖ Families are unloaded from the vehicle and launched one at a time while maintaining social distancing guidelines
- ❖ Families arriving at the end of the trip shall be staggered from each other
- ❖ Families depart the raft or kayak and, upon returning to base, shall drop gear at a storage area while maintaining physical distance
- ❖ Staff shall attend to gear once the guests depart
- ❖ Guests are encouraged to “arrive, paddle and leave” - no congregating or loitering before or after the activity
- ❖ Provide training to workers on up-to-date safety information and precautions including hygiene and other measures aimed at reducing disease transmission
- ❖ Limit visitors and service providers on site; shipping and deliveries should be completed in designated areas, outside the facility if possible
- ❖ Log everyone who arrives at site to enable contact tracing, including customers
- ❖ Employees must stay home if feeling ill.
- ❖ Employees who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the Centers for Disease Control (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) are encouraged to stay home
- ❖ Encourage employees to self-identify symptoms or any close contact to a known or suspected COVID-19 case to the employer
- ❖ Encourage workers who test positive for COVID-19 to disclose to the employer for purposes of cleaning/disinfecting and contact tracing. If the employer is notified of a positive case at the workplace, the employer shall notify the local Board of Health (LBOH) in the city or town where the workplace is located and work with them to trace likely contacts in the workplace and advise employees to isolate and self-quarantine. Testing of other employees may be recommended consistent with guidance and/or at the request of the LBOH
- ❖ Post notice to employees, workers, and customers of important health information and relevant safety measures as outlined in government guidelines

IV. Cleaning and Disinfecting

- ❖ Restrooms and changing facilities shall be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines
- ❖ All vehicles must be cleaned and disinfected between trips in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and CDC guidelines
- ❖ Rafts or Kayaks must be cleaned and disinfected between trips
- ❖ Rafts, Kayaks, SUP's and paddles must be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and CDC guidelines
- ❖ Personal Flotation Devices and helmets must be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and CDC guidelines
- ❖ Conduct frequent cleaning and disinfection of site
- ❖ Keep cleaning logs that include date, time, and scope of cleaning



- ❖ Conduct frequent disinfecting of heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, handrails, bathrooms)
- ❖ In event of a positive case, shut down site for a deep cleaning and disinfecting of the workplace in accordance with current guidance