



Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL FOR DELAWARE BOATING SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAM

**Division of Fish and Wildlife
Enforcement Section
Office of Boating Education
89 Kings Highway
Dover, Delaware 19901**

**Boating Education Specialist:
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BASIC COURSES

The purpose of the Delaware Basic Boating Education program is to provide and maintain the necessary education and/or documentation to meet the prerequisites of Delaware's boating education requirements.

Students can be certified through any of the NASBLA mentioned basic boater education programs. All persons born on or after January 1, 1978 must take an eight (8) hour classroom course or an on-line NASBLA approved certification course. All methods must be NASBLA approved. Any person may take a proctored test given by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement staff or make arrangements for a proctored test to be administered by a Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement volunteer instructor.

CERTIFICATION AGE LIMIT

Delaware law does not have a minimum mandatory age to operate a boat (excluding PWC), see PWC separate laws. Parents/guardians are still responsible for their minor's actions under knowingly permitting to operate to endanger life, limb, and property.

Fish and Wildlife Enforcement staff recommends students taking a course of instruction must be at least 12 years of age. Children under 12 years of age must have a parent or guardian with them. For minors over the age of 12 years, parents/guardians must leave an emergency number to be contacted in case of an emergency. Students who sleep or are disruptive in the class shall have their parents/guardians pick them up immediately. As the instructor, you have the responsibility of determining whether your student stays in class or is excused. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. The use of inappropriate language while in the classroom will be grounds for dismissing a student immediately. Inappropriate behavior constitutes a parent or guardian to be called. At no time, will an instructor place his hands on a student. The safety of the instructor and class is foremost. You may request that a parent or guardian stay with a challenged student. The Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, Office of Boating Education, will provide whatever special needs the student may have. Students that request any special needs, such as an interpreter will be met. Arrangements must be made for these special needs several weeks before the class is held. Contact the Boating Education Specialist immediately to make these arrangements. If there is a charge for these special needs, the Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, Office of Boating Education will take responsibility of it.

OFFICE OF BOATING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Boating Programs:

1. U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
2. U.S. Power Squadron
3. Delaware Basic Boating Course – Eight (8) hours
4. Independent Businesses

U.S. COAST GUARD AUXILIARY

Students attending an authorized U.S.C.G. Auxiliary Basic Skills and Seamanship, Seamanship and Sailing, Boat Smart or any other eight (8) hour classroom course, will receive a Delaware certification reciprocal with other states.

U.S. POWER SQUADRON

1. Students attending an authorized U.S. Power Squadron Sail and Power Boating course will receive Delaware certification.
2. Independent instructors (certified by this Division when teaching a NASBLA approved basic boating course). Students attending a Delaware State Boating course will receive a Delaware certification reciprocal with other states. I.E. Lighthouse Training Institute and any other educational organization approved through the State of Delaware, DNREC, Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, Office of Boating Education.
3. Classes that are not State courses should include a Ten (10) Question State Specific Test furnished by the Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, Office of Boating Education.

TEXT-BASIC BOATING COURSE, NASBLA APPROVED

Direct need for fast, effective learning of the principles of safe boating, taught by certified basic boating instructors in a formal classroom setting. This course teaches theory only. There is no on-the-water training in this course. The full course must be completed.

TALKS, PRESENTATIONS, AND DEMONSTRATIONS

The Office of Boating Education regularly receives requests to address groups on particular topics relating to boating safety. These presentations may last from one to two hours or an entire day. The Office of Boating Education considers these presentations important because they reinforce skills and broaden the knowledge of the participants. Basic boating instructors may be asked to participate in this program. Uniformed Fish and Wildlife agents present “legal requirements” to classes when asked and act as a resource for information on safety, prevention of violations, equipment required being on board, and instilling a respect for our natural resources.

The Fish and Wildlife Enforcement Section, participates in “Career Day” activities to explain our role in boating safety and natural resources enforcement. Enforcement agents should provide individual attention to students as necessary.

BOATING INSTRUCTOR

Prerequisites:

1. Must be 18 years of age.
2. Have adequate boating experience.
3. Must successfully complete a basic boating course.
4. Education – Must be proficient in reading and comprehensive skills.
5. Specialized course training required.
6. Must have instructor certification. Instructor certification training will be provided by Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement.

Individuals must undergo a background check. Refusal to sign a background check waiver will not be accepted as an instructor. Those with criminal arrest records will be reviewed for acceptance on a case by case basis.

Instructor Qualifications:

1. Maximum utilization should be made of the existing cadre of qualified instructors. These instructors have been well trained through State Boating Safety Programs, the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, the United States Power Squadrons, the American Red Cross, the YMCA, the National Boating Safety Course, Lighthouse Training Institute, and other boating oriented agencies. Instructors that have completed the required instructor training from one of these sources, and that provide instruction in NASBLA approved courses, should be considered by state agencies to be qualified instructors in boating safety. However, final determination of an instructor's qualifications for teaching a state boating course rests with the State Boating Law Administrator or other state official charged with administering a boating safety education program.
2. Approval of instructors for specialized courses such as Personal Watercraft, Canoeing, Kayaking, Boardsailing, etc., that are available through the State of Delaware, American National Red Cross, American Canoe Association, Delaware State Fire School, and other approved agencies may be granted. However, such approval shall be in addition to the qualifications set forth above.
3. Apprenticeship programs are required for all new instructors. New instructors will teach and be critiqued by a certified instructor in charge of the course. The certified instructor will sign off on the new instructor and forward the form to the headquarters located in Dover, Delaware.

Instructor Responsibilities:

A. Code of Conduct

Instructors are an integral part of the Boating Education Program and as such, must display the highest code of conduct. As a member of the team, your goal is to educate the boating public, reduce boating accidents and fatalities, and encourage ethical and courteous behavior.

1. Conduct yourself in a manner that brings credit to your organization, the Division of Fish and Wildlife, and the State of Delaware.
2. Provide for the safety of your students at all times.
3. Refrain from long-winded “war stories”. Sometimes a short story will get the point across. Use that time to get the students involved. Try to think of special ways to let the students be a part of the teaching process. Creative training aids are welcome. Any questions and/or concerns should be addressed to the Boating Safety Specialist.
4. Dress appropriately. Business-casual attire is recommended. U.S.C.G. Auxiliary and the U.S. Power Squadron wear appropriate attire as per your directives. One’s appearance reflects one’s professionalism.
5. Follow all standards and policies established by the Office of Boating Education, as outlined in this manual.
6. Be responsible for upholding the standards of the courses you teach. You must present all materials accurately and completely. You may not delete or change the information in boating education material without discussing said information with the Boating Safety Specialist. This office is always open to suggestions in making the program a better one.

B. Standards of Conduct and Communications

1. Refrain from making any false statements or degrading comments, sexual, racial, jokes, and statements to your students that would reflect inappropriately on the Boating Education Program, the Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, the State of Delaware, and yourself.
2. The Affirmative Action Policy of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, the Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, and the Office of Boating Education prohibits discrimination toward anyone on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, age, Vietnam-era veteran status, or physical disability. In addition, no action will be taken that will threaten, intimidate, or retaliate against anyone.

As a representative/volunteer with the Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, this policy is in keeping with that of the State of Delaware as established by State Law and Executive Order. This policy also certifies full compliance with Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. DNREC is a participant in the State of Delaware's Affirmative Action Program.

It is the policy of the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and the Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, that the work environment for the volunteers and the public they work with should reflect mutual respect and appreciation for individual uniqueness and ability. In doing so, we must be aware of actions and use of language that can be construed as demeaning to one's gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious beliefs, political beliefs, ethnicity, racial group, and personality conflicts.

C. Display of Explicit Images

There shall be no display or storage of sexually explicit images, messages, cartoons, items that contain ethnic slurs, racial epithets, or anything that may be construed as harassment or disparagement of others based on their race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious beliefs, and/or political beliefs.

D. Course Preparation

1. Before you can teach, you must determine where the course will be held. Many schools, civic buildings, private clubs, marinas, and libraries have meeting rooms or classrooms available for community education programs. A sponsoring organization would be a good resource. Members of the organization could also be called upon to assist in special topic presentations or in providing additional equipment to enhance your program. The Office of Boating Education is available to assist in locating facilities, especially state owned.
2. Check all supplies before class time to ensure that you have the necessary items and teaching tools.
3. Each course must have objectives, a syllabus or course outline, a workbook or text book, Delaware Boating Law Handbook, and an examination.
4. The suggested reading-comprehension level that is recommended for students of the boating safety courses are 12 years of age or that of 6th to 7th grade reading-comprehension level.

E. Materials Needed:

1. Instructor Books
2. Student Books
3. #2 Pencils
4. Scantron Test Sheets
5. Personal Watercraft Literature
6. Charts
7. Delaware Boating Guides
- * Note: Please refer to the Delaware Boater Guide for the Boating Laws.

F. Method of Implementation

1. Any method of implementation that complements the course design and achieves the desired results of the sponsoring agency or organization is acceptable. A program evaluation that includes performance standards, tests, or a workbook and both, shall be a part of each course.
2. An examination that is administered as substitute for a NASBLA approved boating safety course must contain questions on all subjects listed in the course content section of these standards.
3. Practical application or on-the-water instruction is encouraged but shall be optional, at the discretion of the sponsoring agency, and compatible with course design.

G. Classroom

1. The classroom should be large enough to seat the expected enrollment.
2. When scheduling the room, ask about chairs, tables, chalkboards, and audio-visual equipment that may be available.
3. Make sure proper lighting and comfortable room temperature are present.
4. If possible, reserve the room four to six weeks in advance to allow for proper publicizing of the course.
5. Call assigned area the day before to ensure location, time, and etc.
6. Care should be taken, to leave the room clean, and that the equipments used are in their proper place after each session.
7. Do not leave the facility until each student has secured their transportation and left the premises! If any problems occur, please contact Sgt. Gregory Rhodes.

Office - Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm at (302) 739-3486
Cell – (302) 542-6102

or

Radio Room – 24 hours a day for your county’s closest contacts (302) 739-4580

H. Course Fees

Basic boating courses taught by volunteer instructors are offered free throughout the State. Unless prior approval has been received from the Boating Education Specialist, no boating instructor will charge any fees. Some U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary organizations and U.S. Power Squadron organizations that teach the State course in uniform have charged a small fee for utility payments, and etc.

I. Notification of Course

Each instructor is requested to notify the Office of Boating Education about his or her courses in advance. Intent-to-teach forms will be given to instructors and requested to be sent in time to post scheduled classes.

1. County where courses is located.
2. Locations of the courses and their complete addresses and zip codes.
3. Dates of courses.
4. Times of courses.
5. Instructors' names and their aides, along with a contact telephone number.

J. Publicizing the Course

The Office of Boating Education will create posters for you to advertise your course. You may wish to distribute them or the office can mail them to various Marine dealerships. The office will prepare press releases distributed by the Department to newspapers and radio stations.

All classes are posted on the DNREC, Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement web site at <http://intranet.dnrec.state.de.us/FW/>. The office will also assist with the advertising of U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and U.S. Power Squadron courses, Lighthouse Training Institute, and other private organizations.

K. Team Teaching

Class sizes should be determined by whatever size groups, the instructors feel comfortable teaching. Division of Fish and Wildlife Enforcement, Office of Boating Education, recommends a team teaching concept for every class. Team teaching enables a group of qualified instructors to provide a variety of teaching methods. Also in which, problems can be identified more easily and dealt with immediately with additional instructors/aides available. The Division of Fish and Wildlife, Office of Boating Education, recommends that no instructor should teach alone.

The Office of Boating Education sends out *evaluation forms along with the state certification cards to the students. This effort has played a major role in monitoring complaints and/or compliments. For example: Out of the 55 evaluations received back into the office, there may have been one negative evaluation. This shows that the instructors and their aides had been doing the job expected of them, and as well as, them doing a good job.

L. Field Exercises

Anyone participating in field exercises **must wear approved PFDs at all times** when representing the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Office of Boating Education.

**** Injuries must be documented and reported immediately.**

M. Course Documentation

It is your responsibility as the instructor to complete and turn in the proper documentations for your courses. A course is not complete until you have done so. The Office of Boating Education must receive all records no later than ten (10) working days after the completion of the course. Postal paid pre-addressed envelopes will be provided for this purpose.

The following *forms must be sent to the Dover office:

1. Intent to Teach
2. Course Record Sheet
3. Students Sign-Up Sheet
4. Scantron Answer Sheets and/or Tests
5. Instructor Time Sheet

N. Forms

All *forms must be filled out legibly and completely. This is necessary to accurately input information into the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Office of Boating Education database.

* Note: Samples of forms are provided at the end of the manual.

O. Scantron Forms

In 1989, our record keeping became entirely computerized with the purchase of the Scantron system. Care must be taken in handling the forms. The top edge and left side of the sheet must not be mishandled, bent, stapled, folded, or paper clipped. This will cause the computer to jam, misread, and/or not read the forms at all. The result being all the data must be manually typed into the database.

All information must be filled in with the exception of the student's social security number. If the student wishes not to give that information, the computer will assign a number to that field. Instructors should review all *Scantron forms for accuracy.

1. Students are required to use only #2 pencils to complete the Scantron forms. The Scantron system does not recognize the use of any other form of writing implements. The use of any other writing implements, results in the system not being able to read the student's information or test answers.
2. The information required by the student is considered the same requirements needed for a state driver's license and/or a state identification card. It is recommended that while one instructor is teaching the class, the other instructor and/or aide can be reviewing the forms to ensure that the students did not omit any information required. All information on the Scantron form is vital for issuance of the State Boating Safety certification card. Information pertaining to height, weight, race, and etc. must be completed or the certification card will not be sent to the student until said information is supplied to the Division of Fish and Wildlife, Office of Boating Education.
3. Have students darken the area corresponding to each letter or number of the required information. The same information is to be printed in the boxes above. The numbered areas on the bottom of the form is reserved for the standard final exam. This can be used to as the answer sheet for the exam.

Note: Do not use the answer sheet if you are using the Ten Question State Specific Test. The Scantron system does not recognize the format.

4. When grading the final exam, the instructor can grade it as P (Pass), F (Fail), or I (Incomplete). The minimum percent of correct answers to achieve a passing grade on the test is 70%. The Office of Boating Education does not need to know the grade of the student, however the office does receives calls from the students or their parents inquiring about the final percentage grade. Marking the forms with the final grade will be left up to the discretion of the instructor.

Note: Scantron forms, whether passing, failing, or incomplete, must be returned to the Office of Boating Education, Dover, Delaware.

* Note: A sample of the form is provided at the end of the manual.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The State of Delaware, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, expects all volunteers to act in a professional manner.
2. Volunteers are defined as any individual working directly or indirectly for the Department such as instructors, presenters, aides, or contractual.
3. Offensive treatment of a volunteer and/or the public which creates an intimidating, hostile, or abusive work environment is prohibited by this policy and will not be tolerated. Offensive treatment may be verbal or physical behavior, which is derogatory, disparaging, bullying, threatening and/or disrespectful.
4. Constructive criticism that which will improve the business by clarifying and/or instructing, should be welcomed when delivered with respect and discretion. No instructor or aide should correct another when teaching. The question or concern should be brought up discreetly and privately and if need be, corrected when the class resumes by the instructor teaching that part of the class.
5. Differences of opinions should always be handled privately and discreetly.
6. Volunteers should maintain a civil work atmosphere at all times. Shouting, yelling, using vulgarities, and/or swearing will not be tolerated.
7. Sexual harassment is a form of serious misconduct. Each volunteer of the State of Delaware, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, regardless of sex, is entitled to a working environment, which is free from intimidation and sexual harassment.

The Department will not tolerate any form of sexual harassment by anyone of either sex in compliance with Executive Order 24.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment does not refer to behavior or occasional compliments of a socially acceptable nature. It refers to behavior that is not welcome, that is personally offensive, that fails to respect the rights of others, that debilitates morale and that, therefore interferes with the work effectiveness of its victims and their co-workers.

The following practices are prohibited:

1. Making an unwelcome sexual advance, a request for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature a condition of favors. This includes not only co-workers, but any person while in contact with, during volunteer work for the Department.
2. Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment by such conduct.

Forms of sexual harassment may also be manifested in different ways. One of these is the demand for sexual favors. Other behaviors that may be offensive and grounds for a claim of sexual harassment include:

1. Verbal

- Sexual Innuendos
- Suggestive Comments
- Jokes of a Sexual Nature
- Sexual Propositions
- Threats

2. Non-Verbal

- Sexually Suggestive Object or Pictures
- Graphic Comments
- Suggestive or Insulting Sounds
- Leering
- Whistling
- Obscene Gestures

3. Physical

- Unwanted Physical Contact. I.E. Touching, Pinching, or Brushing the Body.
- Coerced Sexual Intercourse
- Assault

Sexual harassment may be overt or subtle. Some behavior, which may be appropriate in a social setting, may not be appropriate or permitted in the work place. Regardless of the form it takes, verbal and/or physical; sexual harassment can be insulting and demeaning to the recipient of either sex and **will not be tolerated**. Each person is expected to comply with this policy and take appropriate measures to ensure that such conduct does not occur.

REPORTING

Any volunteer and/or employee who believe that she or he is being sexually harassed should advise the offending individual that the conduct in question is offensive and request that it be discontinued immediately. If the she or he does not desire to mention the offending behavior to the offending individual, or the conduct in question is not discontinued, she or he should bring the concerns to the attention of their coordinator. Any volunteer who is uncomfortable with anyone's action should separate oneself from that offender's presence.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Each person is expected to comply with this policy and any violation may warrant immediate, appropriate disciplinary action. Inappropriate remarks or treatment based on any of the above are not tolerated and such behavior will result in termination of any volunteer work. Disciplinary action shall depend upon the severity of the incident.

All persons have the right under the law, to register complaints when they feel that the law has been violated in any respect. No one shall tolerate any such actions and should report the same immediately. If you feel you need help, the coordinator will assist you.

Complaints should be written and signed. The written complaints should include any pertinent details, timeframes, names of volunteer(s), employee(s), and/or person(s) involved the nature of their involvement, and statements or quotes that the complainant attributes to anyone involved. The complaints will then be submitted to the BLA and/or the State of Delaware, Boating Education Coordinator. The Boating Education Coordinator will then meet separately with the complainant and anyone else involved with the complaint, to discuss the problem, review the complaint, and obtain any additional information and/or facts needed within ten (10) working days after the complaint is received.