



Sailing and Canoeing

Recreational activities are pillars of summer/winter camp, summer school, and recreational center experiences. They provide an opportunity for socialization and learning in a fun setting. These activities also provide an increased liability and potential for staff and/or participant injury. The safety of participants and staff should be standard operating procedure. It should be completed to the highest professional standards and in line with federal, state, local, and accrediting agency guidelines. The following checklist template provides a high level oversight to assist with your activity structure. Your organization is responsible for the development of your own written program guidelines and policies for the oversight of your activities. Through consistent management and preventative programs, exposures can be reduced to help ensure a safe recreational experience.

Program Pre-Activity:

- Written program guidelines which outline major components including, staff qualifications, participant guidelines, age requirements, liability controls, safety equipment requirements, training and other protocols as determined by your program.
- Participant assessment protocols in place and completed in line with internal written policies. This includes a physical and emotional assessment to assess their ability to safely participate in the activity.
- Legally reviewed liability waivers, in line with state and federal guidelines, signed by legal guardians. Kept on file in a secure location.
- If participant meets guidelines and passes program assessment, training program that includes equipment usage policies and expectation for participation is completed.
 - Completed prior to participation and must be renewed per internal written policy.

Oversight:

- Operation must carry a separate accident and health insurance policy/Required Accident & Health policy for participants
- Watercraft instructors should be certified (US Sailing/American Red Cross Small Craft Safety/American Camp Association)
- Watercraft Guard should be identified. This is similar to a Swim lifeguard, however focused on providing supervision in non-swim areas.
- Instructors and guards must also maintain First Aid and age-appropriate CPR certification.
- Clearly identify the area of water the activity will be limited to.

Equipment

- Proper U.S Coast Guard-approved life jackets must be available for all participants and must be worn.
- All watercraft must be locked up when not being actively supervised. At no times should they be left unlocked if not in use.
- Life jackets, canoes, paddles, sales, masts and all other equipment should be inspected and documented by a qualified staff member before each use.

Additional Resources:

[American Camp Association](#)

[American Canoe Association](#)

[U.S. Sailing](#)

Providing solutions
to help our members
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For your risk management
and safety needs, contact
Nationwide Loss Control
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