

# Providence College

## Small Boat Safety Manual

REVISION: 0

ADOPTED: 29 JUNE 2023

ADMINISTRATIVE REVISIONS: 03/17/2026

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH & SAFETY DEPARTMENT

OFFICE OF GENERAL COUNSEL

## Table of Contents

1	.0 OVERVIEW	3
	1.1 Purpose	3
	1.2 Contents	3
	1.3 Applicability	3
2	.0 RESPONSIBILITY	5
	2.1 Small Boat Safety Committee	5
	2.2 Principal Investigators	5
	2.3 Boat Operators	5
	2.4 Passengers	6
3	.0 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	7
	3.1 Operating Areas	7
	3.2 Boat Operators	7
4	.0 EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES	8
	4.1 Vessel Requirements	8
	4.2 Equipment	8
	4.3 Boat Float Plan	8
	4.4 Communications	9
	4.5 Weather	9
	4.6 Safety Checks	9
	4.6.1 Prior to Departure	9
	4.6.2 During Trailering	10
	4.6.3 Launching	10
	4.6.4 While Underway	11
	4.6.5 Retrieving	11
	4.6.6 After Returning	11
5	.0 WEATHER MONITORING	13
	5.1 Small Craft Warnings	13
	5.2 Gale Warnings	13
	5.3 Storm Watch	13
	5.4 Storm Warnings	14
	5.5 . Tropical Storm/Hurricane Watch and Warnings	14
6	.0 Communication Systems	15
	6.1 Safety Whistle	15
	6.2 Marine VHF Radio	15



6.3 Emergency Call Procedures	15
7 .0 Emergency Action Plan	17
7.1 Priorities During an Emergency	17
7.2 Staff Onsite at the Time of the Incident	17
7.3 Weather Emergencies	17
7.4 Other Boating Emergencies	18
7.4.1 Person Overboard	18
7.4.2 Cold Weather Immersion	19
8 .0 RECORD KEEPING AND INCIDENT REPORTING	20
8.1 Program Approval	20
8.2 Routine Records	20
8.3 Incident Reporting	20

## Appendices

Appendix A	Boat Operator Statement of Responsibility Form
Appendix B	USCG and RIDEM Boating Requirements
Appendix C	Float Plan Form
Appendix D	Vessel Safety Checklist
Appendix E	Emergency Call Procedures Guide
Appendix F	Rhode Island Boating Accident Form
Appendix G	On-the-Job Injury Form
Appendix H	Student Injury Report Form

PROVIDENCE COLLEGE  
SMALL BOAT SAFETY MANUAL

## **1 .0 OVERVIEW**

### **1.1 Purpose**

Small boat operations involve certain risks that must be understood and addressed prior to beginning any time on the water. This Small Boat Safety Manual (the Manual) has been prepared to prevent the loss of life, personal injury, property damage, and environmental impacts that may be associated with both educational and recreational boating activities. It is imperative that all individuals spending time on the water understand their equipment, the rules of the water and road, and the effects of weather conditions.

The purpose of this Manual is to establish good boating practices under the auspices of Providence College (PC), to ensure that all PC-sanctioned boating activities are conducted in a reasonably safe and efficient manner, and to familiarize participants with the basic procedures that affect their own safety and the safety of others.

All PC small boat operators are required to understand and observe the guidelines and rules of this document. All boats and equipment used by authorized PC operators in United States waters, regardless of ownership, will conform to the standards set forth in this Manual and Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and United States Coast Guard (USCG) requirements, in addition to the requirements of the applicable state or local jurisdiction should the vessel leave Rhode Island waters.

### **1.2 Contents**

This Manual contains policies and procedures for all boating operations. This includes:

1. Policies and procedures that pertain to all PC boating operations.
2. Administrative procedures for conducting PC small boat activities.
3. Equipment and maintenance recommendations.
4. Reporting guidelines.

### **1.3 Applicability**

This Manual applies whenever PC faculty, staff, or students are using powered or sailing vessels under auspices of PC's operations and educational and recreational programming, whether or not the boat is owned by PC.



For the purposes of this Manual, a small boat is any boat less than 26 feet in length (US Coast Guard Class 1 and smaller). In order to be approved for use by PC personnel, a small boat must be numbered in accordance with the regulations of the State of Rhode Island or in accordance with applicable Federal Law or with a federally-approved numbering system of another State. Small boats used under PC auspices may fall into three categories:

1. Boats owned by PC and maintained by individual PC programs (e.g., Department of Biology, Recreational Sports, etc.).
2. Privately-owned boats used for PC research.
3. Vessels chartered by PC personnel for the purpose of conducting research or education or college-sanctioned recreation.

## **2 .0 RESPONSIBILITY**

### **2.1 Small Boat Safety Committee (SBSC)**

The PC Small Boat Safety Committee is responsible for recommending changes to this Small Boat Safety Manual and for general oversight of the small boat operations at PC, including reviews of incidents involving injury or loss/damage to equipment. The PC SBSC will also make recommendations to applicable responsible division heads for appropriate sanctions in the case of recurring incidents and/or blatant disregard of safety policies and procedures.

In the case of programs requesting to use non-PC-owned equipment, requests will be made to the SBSC, which will review the equipment specifications along with damage and liability insurance coverage in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel. The SBSC will maintain the list of PC-owned and insured boats and associated trailers through the Office of the General Counsel.

Membership in the SBSC will consist of faculty from departments in which open water research is conducted and staff representatives from the Legal, Public Safety/Emergency Management, and Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) departments. The Chair of the SBSC will be the EHS Director.

### **2.2 Principal Investigators**

Principal Investigators (research) will assure that all small boat operations that are part of a program under their direction are conducted in accordance with this Manual. Principal Investigators are responsible for the implementation and enforcement of the safety requirements of this plan for all activities on the water, as well as the required activities before and after the time spent on the water. It is required that any Principal Investigators who operate boats, either owned by college- or privately-owned and used for PC research, meet all safety standards required by the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) and the United States Coast Guard (USCG). Principal Investigators are responsible for ensuring that all boat passengers are briefed on safety and emergency response procedures.

### **2.3 Boat Operator**

Individuals must apply to the PC SBSC for authorization as a “boat operator” using the Statement of Responsibility Form included as Appendix A. Only PC individuals shall be designated as boat operators on PC-owned or rented vessels. PC students, who are at least 19 years old and in sophomore enrollment status, who otherwise meet the requirements of this Manual, may be authorized as a Boat Operator in the discretion of the PC SBSC and provided they are accompanied by a PC employee, who is an authorized Boat Operator under this

Manual, during any boating activity.

The designated boat operator is responsible for all aspects of boating operations and safety, regardless of the presence of senior staff or faculty in the boat. These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- The safe navigation of the vessel to and from the site(s) of operation.
- The safe operation of all equipment, either in the collection of data or the handling of the vessel.
- Safe transport of the vessel to and from the launch site.
- Ensuring that all required operational and safety equipment is on board before getting underway and properly stowed upon return.
- Enforcing safe behavior of all persons on board, including the wearing of USCG-approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) at all times on the water.
- Acquainting all passengers with safety equipment, its proper use, potential hazards, and an emergency plan before departure.

Non-compliance with this Manual must be reported to the PC SBSC for review.

Any operator may deviate from the requirements of this Manual to the extent necessary to prevent or minimize a situation that is likely to cause death, serious physical harm, or major environmental damage. A written report of such actions must be submitted within 24-hours to the PC SBSC explaining the circumstances and justifications.

## **2.4 Passengers**

Passengers are required to comply with this Manual as it pertains to them. The boat operator is in charge at all times. Passengers are required to wear USCG-approved PFDs at all times on the water. The safety guidelines should not be deviated from unless a specific situation has occurred where following a guideline could cause injury – this decision should be made by the boat operator. If any passenger does not feel the weather or conditions of the vessel or environment are safe, it is their right and responsibility to inform the boat operator and not participate in the boating activity. The passenger also has the right to report unsafe conditions during the activity or after the fact to the SBSC for review.

### 3 .0 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

The regulations in this Manual must be observed wherever small boat operations are carried out under the auspices of PC. All operators must follow the provisions of the Manual and all equipment used must conform to RIDEM and USCG regulations, and, as applicable, any other state or municipal rules and regulations depending upon the location of the activity. If participating in a water activity in a vessel not owned by PC, the boat operator must also follow the policies of the owning body.

#### 3.1 Operating Areas

The regulations be observed at all locations where boating operations are conducted under the auspices of the PC. Operators are responsible for knowing and complying with all local requirements and regulations for both equipment and operator licensing, as well as RIDEM and USCG regulations.

#### 3.2 Boat Operators

Boat operators must have and demonstrate basic knowledge and competencies for handling the vessel they intend to use in the expected environment and conditions or their time on the water. Anyone operating a vessel **powered by a motor of more than 10 horsepower** must pass an approved boater education course; proof of this completion must be carried by each operator on board all qualifying vessels and be provided to the PC SBSC. An operator that holds a valid, current commercial vessel operator's license is exempt from this requirement.

All boat operators are required to read and understand the USCG small boat requirements and RIDEM boating safety material included in Appendix B.

All boat operators are required to review the required pre-use vessel safety checks, basic start-up and underway procedures, navigation rules, incident response and man-overboard rescue procedures, mooring and anchoring procedures, and basic knot methods.

Departments and boat owners may set additional requirements for the use of their vessels.

## **4 .0 EQUIPMENT AND PROCEDURES**

### **4.1 Vessel Requirements**

All PC watercraft must comply with USCG and RIDEM regulations, including boater education course requirements.

All boats used by PC personnel are required to have an installed data plate that designates the number of people and weight capacity according to the manufacturer's specifications. It is the responsibility of the boat operator to stay within these limits and to have all weight evenly distributed so that the boat will be trimmed properly. Any modifications to a vessel, such as the addition of a platform designed for specific research needs, must be reviewed and approved by the SBSC.

### **4.2 Equipment**

All operators and passengers of watercraft must wear a US Coast Guard-approved, non-inflatable personal flotation device (PFD) at all times on the water.

All operators must carry a USCG-approved first aid kit for water operations.

Motorized watercraft must be equipped with an USCG B-1 handheld fire extinguisher.

Watercraft must be equipped with communication equipment. Motorized equipment must have a Marine VHF radio, while the non-motorized club boats can be served by the radio on the operator's vessel. It is recommended that all watercraft operators and passengers have a functioning cell phone. All watercraft must have a safety whistle, or equivalent sound distress signal such as a fog horn, onboard.

The operator shall be familiar with the operation of the equipment and shall inspect all emergency equipment prior to departure. Special attention should be given to PFDs and communication equipment (radios and cell phones). He/she shall notify the boat owner SBSC of any malfunctioning equipment used during their operation.

### **4.3 Float Plan**

All boat operators must file a float plan with the SBSC Chair prior to any water activities. The minimum requirements for a float plan are:

1. The boat being used;



2. The planned date, time and place of departure;
3. The planned date, time and place of return;
4. The site(s) of operation;
5. The Principal Investigator (if research trip);
6. The names and affiliation of all people on board;
7. Means of Communication (i.e., cell phone number(s) and/or VHF working frequency);
8. Safety equipment on board; and
9. Emergency contact information for people on board.

Appendix C is a USCG Float Plan that may be used for PC boating operations.

#### **4.4 Communications**

Scheduled check-ins by cell phone and/or radio communications shall be maintained between boat operator and their shore contact. To initiate any change in an approved float plan, the shore contact must be notified and changes confirmed. If the boat operator is unable to notify the shore contact, the boat operator must adhere to the filed float plan. Failure to maintain scheduled radio communications (within one-half hour) may cause initiation of USCG Search and Rescue procedures.

The shore contact shall be notified by phone or in person upon completion of work. Notice of return is required within one hour after the scheduled time of return. If shore-based contact is not made, procedures for USCG action may be initiated. Vessel operators and shore contacts shall take into account the limited VHF radio and cell phone coverage in coastal waters.

#### **4.5 Weather**

Use of any boat is always contingent upon weather conditions. Responsibility for monitoring weather conditions prior to departure and during operations resides with the operator. When small craft advisories are issued by the National Weather Service for the waters of a planned operation or experiment, boats that are scheduled for operations within that area should postpone their operations until more favorable conditions prevail.

#### **4.6 Safety Checks**

##### *4.61 Prior to Departure*

The boat operator shall:



1. File the Float Plan with the designated onshore responsible person.
2. Perform a functional inspection of the boat and all equipment. Appendix D is a Vessel Safety Checklist.
3. Assess all environmental risks weather conditions and sea conditions.
4. Inform all passengers of emergency procedures – man-overboard, fire, and abandonment and the appropriate methods for seeking assistance.
5. Inform all passengers of the location of emergency equipment.
6. Inform all passengers of additional hazards and appropriate precautions for the particular environment, weather, and objectives of the operation.

#### *4.62 During Trailering*

During trailering operations, the operator shall:

1. Carefully inspect the trailer before use. All tires, lugs, hubs, lights, hitches, and safety chain connections must be inspected before use.
2. The boat must be securely attached to the trailer and secondary straps and lines used to prevent shift during transport; lines must be secured so as to not become caught in a trailer wheel.
3. Double check the following connection items:
  - a. The hitch is secure and the lock/pin is in place.
  - b. The trailer chains are crossed under the hitch and secured so that the end of the hook is facing the boat.
  - c. The emergency brake cable is secured to the vehicle with the end of the hook facing the boat.
  - d. All trailer lights are functioning properly.
  - e. All tires are properly inflated, including the spare tire that must be present.
4. All antennae and equipment that extend vertically must be lowered during trailering to prevent snagging and damage.
5. A spotter must be used outside of the trailering vehicle and within the driver's sight at all times, whether the trailer is loaded or not.

The trailer should be inspected at every stop. If any indication is noted that there is something wrong with the trailer or boat, the driver must pull over as soon as safely possible to perform a safety check. Only drivers authorized to operate PC vehicles are allowed to use PC trailers in accordance with the PC Motor Vehicle Use Policy. Any issues with the trailer or equipment must be reported immediately to the SBSC for arranging repairs.

#### *4.63 Launching*

Before backing the trailer into the water, the boat operator must check the following items:

1. The drain plug is installed, if applicable.



2. The securing straps on the back of the boat have been removed.
3. Disconnect the trailer lights.
4. The battery switch has been turned on, if applicable.
5. The fuel switch is in the on position, if applicable.
6. The trailering lock is off, if applicable.
7. The tilt support lever is up. Motors are up and ready to be lowered.
8. All gear has been loaded into the boat and properly secured.

Once the boat has been backed into the water to the point of buoyancy, lower the motor and start is before releasing the boat from the trailer. Allow the engine to warm up briefly and check for signs of stalling or improper functioning.

#### *4.64 While Underway*

It is required that all operators and passengers will follow the requirements of this Manual and the boating navigation rules during all operations. This includes, but is not limited to, appropriate and safe behavior, PFD usage, and acting as representatives of PC while on the water and in transit.

Be advised that USCG personnel, RIDEM Conservation Officers or analogous authorities in other state waters, harbor masters, and police officers all have the authority to stop and board any vessel within their respective jurisdiction.

#### *4.65 Retrieving*

The boat operator must consider wind and current conditions at the approach to the trailer. Once the boat is on the trailer, secured by the winch, and security chain is pulled up, the boat operator must do the following:

1. Secure the rear of the boat with the straps.
2. Raise the engine, lower the trailering lock, and lower engine into the locked position.
3. Remove drain plugs.
4. Secure all loose lines and gear.
5. Turn off battery and fuel switches.
6. Lower any antennae or objects that project above the boat.

#### *4.66 After Returning*

The boat operator shall:

1. Check in with shore contact person upon return.
2. Use fresh water to thoroughly rinse the boat and trailer to remove all mud, debris, and vegetation.
3. Shut down all electronics.



4. Remove all personal items, research-related items, and trash from the boat.
5. Properly stow all safety equipment and dedicated equipment.
6. Note any problems with the boat or equipment that occurred, and inform the responsible department within 24 hours.

## **5 .0 WEATHER MONITORING**

Each program is responsible for monitoring weather for their program. Reliable weather conditions can be obtained through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Weather Service (NWS), and the US Coast Guard (USCG) VHF Channels 16 and 22. The following details types of weather warnings and watches to understand and the procedures for determining operations.

### **5.1 Small Craft Warnings**

A small craft warning is issued by the National Weather Service when winds have reached, or are expected to reach within 12 hours, 25 to 28 miles per hour (mph) and/or waves are expected to reach heights of four feet or greater.

In the event of a small craft warning, any recreational boating will be cancelled; if a small craft warning is received while on the water, the Boat Operator will return to dock as soon as possible. Research trips may be allowed to occur during small craft warnings, depending on the experience of the boat operator and the type and size of the vessel. This determination will be made through the SBSC. A small craft advisory during a marine operation will require the Boat Operator to assess the weather conditions and vessel sea worthiness during the trip. It is recommended that research operations be completed as soon as possible and the vessel returned to shore.

### **5.2 Gale Warnings**

A gale warning is issued by the National Weather Service when winds are present or expected at 39 to 54 mph or when gale-force winds are imminent at sea.

No research or recreational PC-sponsored marine activities will occur during gale warnings. Any gale warning received during operations will require immediate return to dock.

### **5.3 Storm Watch**

A storm watch is issued by the National Weather Service when conditions are favorable for the development of dangerous weather patterns (e.g., hurricanes, tornadoes, and severe thunderstorms), but the dangerous condition is not currently present.

PC-sponsored research and recreational marine activities are not permitted during storm watch conditions.

### **5.4 Storm Warnings**

Storm warnings are advisories issued by the National Weather Service to warn of occurring,



approaching, or high-probability dangerous weather.

PC-sponsored research and recreational marine activities are not permitted during storm warning conditions. Any storm warning received during operations will require immediate return to dock.

### **5.5 Tropical Storm/Hurricane Watch and Warnings**

A tropical storm is an organized, low-pressure system with a defined circulation and with sustained winds between 39 and 73 mph. A tropical storm watch is issued by the National Weather Service when tropical storm conditions are possible within 36 hours. A tropical storm warning is issued when conditions are expected within 24 hours or less.

A hurricane is an intense tropical weather system with a well-defined circulation and sustained wind speed exceeding 73 mph. A hurricane watch indicates a potential hurricane within the next 24 to 36 hours. A hurricane warning indicates an hurricane strike within the next 24 hours.

PC-sponsored research and recreational marine activities are not permitted during tropical storm/hurricane watch or warning conditions. Any tropical storm/hurricane watch or warning received during operations will require immediate return to dock.

## 6 .0 COMMUNICATION SYSTEMS

The following systems provide redundancy and function across varying technologies to ensure safety of all PC faculty, staff, and students involved in PC boating activities.

### 6.1 Safety Whistle

All non-motorized vessels will be equipped with a safety whistle. Safety whistles will be tested prior to every use on the water. In the event of a water emergency, the vessel user will signal distress with repeated short blasts of the whistle. It is the responsibility of all vessel operators to respond to a safety whistle signal while on the water.

### 6.2 Marine VHF Radio

Marine VHF radios are intended for short-range communications (e.g., within 5-10 nautical miles) and USCG station communications up to 20 nautical miles. VHF Channel 16 (156.800 MHz) is reserved worldwide for distress communications.

Each powered vessel must be equipped with a VHF marine radio, and that radio must be maintained on Channel 16 when not in other active communications. USCG announces storm warnings, weather advisories, and other urgent messaging on Channel 16.

### 6.3 Emergency Call Procedures

It is important to understand and use proper radio/telephone call procedures to expedite rescue and emergency response. All boat operators must be familiar with call procedures. When calling in an emergency, the caller must never be the first person to end the call, so that the responder can receive all needed information during the call.

On a VHF marine radio, Channel 16 is the emergency channel. Radios must be left tuned to this channel at all times, with the exception of necessary communications on another channel. In the event of an emergency, Channel 16 communications must proceed as follows:

1. Distress signal "MAYDAY" is spoken three times.
2. The words "THIS IS" spoken once.
3. Name of vessel in distress, spoken three times, and boat registration number, spoken once.
4. Repeat "MAYDAY" and name of vessel, spoken once.
5. Give position of latitude and longitude or by bearing (true or magnetic and state which) and distance to a well-known landmark such as a navigational aid or small island. If these references are not available, use any terms that will assist a responder in locating



the vehicle in distress. Include information on vessel travel, such as course, speed, and destination.

6. State nature of distress (e.g., sinking, fire, etc.).
7. State the kind of assistance that is required.
8. Indicate the number of persons onboard.
9. Provide any other information that might facilitate rescue, such as length of vessel, persons needing medical attention, color hull, etc.
10. The word "OVER."
11. Repeat at regular intervals until an answer is received.

Stay by the radio if possible. Responders can find a vessel more quickly if a signal is transmitting.

Appendix E is a reference guide for call procedures that may be printed and mounted for emergency use.

## 7 .0 EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

This section describes actions to be taken in the event of an incident while participating in waterfront activities. The goals of these steps are to:

- Prevent further deterioration of conditions.
- Ensure the safety of those participants not immediately involved in the incident.
- Ensure that victims are given appropriate care in a timely and effective manner.

### 7.1 Priorities During an Emergency

***The safety and welfare of water users, not equipment, is the number one priority.***

- All injured persons on the water will return to the shore.
- Boats can be left and recovered when convenient.
- Protect victims from further harm and make sure lives are not at risk.
- Provide life-sustaining aid, if required. Ensure no other injuries occur. Try to prevent well-intentioned, but untrained, people from doing more harm than good by moving injured persons unnecessarily.

*People not involved in the incident should not be put at risk.*

- Do not let the incident distract from the health and safety of all people on the water.

*Determine which emergency services are required.*

- On the water: Marine VHF standby and hailing on **Channel 16**.

### 7.2 Staff Onsite at the Time of the Incident

Any Providence College personnel present during an incident, but not directly involved, should attempt to complete the following action items:

- Assess nature of incident and determine whether or not it is life-threatening.
- Assist in getting other watercraft users in the area on shore or to another area of the water, away from the incident area.
- Assist in rescue, if necessary and properly trained.
- Provide response assistance, such as CPR or first aid, if necessary and properly trained.
- Contact emergency responders if others are incapable of doing so.
- Collect information on incident and impacted people to provide to emergency responders and for incident reporting, after the incident has been addressed.

### 7.3 Weather Emergencies

As discussed in Section 5.0, it is the responsibility of the boat operator to monitor weather



conditions prior to launch and during all operations underway. Weather can change rapidly. Channel 16 on the marine radio will receive emergency weather updates. Impending severe weather will require the immediate return to shore and suspension of all water operations.

If caught in severe weather, the boat operator must prepare the vessel and passengers for those conditions using the following procedures:

- Slow the vessel speed, but keep enough power to maintain headway and steering.
- Close all hatches, windows, and doors to reduce the chance of swamping.
- Stow any unnecessary gear.
- Turn on navigational lights and sound fog horn, if applicable.
- Keep bilges free of water. Be prepared to bail to remove water if necessary.
- If there is lightning, disconnect all electrical equipment. Steer clear of metal objects.
- Ensure all passengers are wearing their PFD.
- Move passengers to sit on the vessel floor close to the centerline of the boat for safety and stability.
- If possible, head for the nearest shore that is safe to approach. However, it may be safest to ride out the storm if a vessel is caught in it.
- Head the bow into waves at a 45-degree angle.
- If the engine stops, drop a sea anchor to keep the bow headed into the wind. A bucket can serve as an anchor in an emergency. If insufficient, the conventional anchor may be used to prevent drifting and swamping.

## **7.4 Other Boating Emergencies**

### *7.4.1 Person Overboard*

In order to prevent person overboard incidents while boating, it is important for the boat operator and passengers to not sit on any vessel surfaces not designed for seating, such as the gunwale, bow, seat backs, or motor cover. Pedestal seats should only be used for sitting when the boat is underway at idle speed or less. Occupants should not stand up in or move about the vessel while it is underway. Occupants should also not lean out of the boat.

A person overboard may also be the result of swamping or capsizing. The risk of these incidents can be reduced by not overloading a boat, slowing it appropriately when turning, anchored by the bow, and avoiding boating in rough water or bad weather.

To respond to a person overboard:

- Reduce vessel speed.
- Toss the victim a throwable PFD.
- Turn the boat around and slowly pull alongside the victim. Approach should be from



downwind or into the current, whichever is stronger.

- Turn off the engine.
- Pull the victim aboard over the stern with the intent of keeping the weight in the boat balanced.

If the operator has gone overboard, they should stay with the boat and attempt to reboard, or climb on top if it has capsized.

#### *7.4.2 Cold Water Immersion*

The effects of cold water immersion and hypothermia can occur in water that is less than 60° Fahrenheit. If a person falls overboard in cold water, response time is especially critical. Victims who fall overboard suffer initial cold water shock in the first minute, which causes hyperventilation. This can be especially dangerous if the victim is unable to keep their head above water, as the involuntary deep breaths can cause water inhalation and drowning. After the first few minutes, the second stage of cold water immersion causes cold incapacitation, also called swim failure, where a victim is unable to control their muscles. Finally, hypothermia is the final state of cold water immersion. In hypothermia, victims may experience exhaustion, loss of muscle response, confusion, and slurred speech.

If a victim falls overboard in cold water conditions, the following may reduce the risks and effects of cold water immersion:

- Wearing a PFD can reduce the dangers associated with first and second state cold water immersion by keeping the head above water and reducing the requirement for active swimming to keep afloat.
- Dress in several layers of clothing under the PFD when the water temperature is cold, or wear a wet/dry suit.
- If a person does go overboard, instruct them to keep as much of their body out of the water as possible by hugging their knees into their chest.
- A person overboard should stay with the boat.
- A person overboard should not thrash or move excessively.
- If several people are overboard, instruct them to huddle together with arms around each other's shoulders.

Following any cold water immersion incident, victims must seek medical attention upon rescue and as soon as possible following a return to shore.

## 8.0 RECORD KEEPING AND INCIDENT REPORTING

### 8.1 Program Approval

All new PC programs involving watercraft, and any significant changes to existing programs, must be reviewed and approved by the PC Office of Environmental, Health, and Safety and the SBSC. This review will ensure safety protocols and procedures are in place prior to program activation.

### 8.2 Routine Records

The designee (i.e. departments owning boats, individual owners of boats, etc.) shall keep a file of usage for all boats, including a log of scheduled and unscheduled maintenance for each boat, boat trailer, and outboard engine.

The SBSC will maintain records of incident reports and copies of operator forms and certifications.

### 8.3 Incident Reporting

All incidents, including injuries, damage to vehicles or vessels, and near misses, involving boats must be reported to the SBSC and PC Office of Public Safety and to the department to which the program belongs for review within 48 hours of the incident. The RIDEM Rhode Island Boating Accident Form (Appendix F) must be used to report all incidents to the SBSC. The SBSC shall investigate and document the accident and related personal injury and/or property damage and prepare a report with recommended further action for submittal to EHS and the applicable department head.

Any incident involving personal injury or fatality of PC faculty or staff must also be reported to PC Human Resources and PC Office of Public Safety **immediately** following incident resolution. The On-the-Job Injury form, for Human resources reporting, is included as Appendix G.

Any incident involving personal injury or fatality of a student must also be reported to the governing department and PC Office of Public Safety **immediately** following incident resolution via the form in Appendix H and to EHS within 24 hours of the incident.

In addition, if the incident meets the following criteria, SBSC will report the incident to RIDEM within five days of the incident:

- Loss of life or disappearance from a vessel.
- Injury to any person that requires medical treatment beyond ordinary first aid. This includes ambulance/first responder calls or emergency room/urgent care visits.
- Complete loss of a vessel.



PROVIDENCE  
COLLEGE

## **APPENDIX A**

### **BOAT OPERATOR STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY FORM**



PROVIDENCE  
COLLEGE

## APPENDIX A

### BOAT OPERATOR

#### STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

I understand that as a designated boat operator, I am responsible for all aspects of boating operations, regardless of the presence of any senior staff or faculty in the boat.

These responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Safe navigation of the vessel to and from the site(s) of operation
- Safe operation of all equipment
- Safe transport of the vehicle to and from the launch site(s)
- Insuring that the vessel is in proper working order prior to use
- Insuring that all operational and safety equipment are on board
- Enforcing safe behavior of all persons on board.

I have thoroughly read and understand the contents of the Small Boat Safety Manual and agree to follow all procedures therein.

---

Boat Operator Printed Name

---

Date

---

Boat Operator Signature

## APPENDIX B

### USCG AND RIDEM BOATING REQUIREMENTS

US Coast Guard: [Recreational Boaters](#)

RI Department of Environmental

Management: [Boating Handbook](#)



**APPENDIX C**  
**FLOAT PLAN FORM**

**US Coast Guard:**

**Recreational**

**[Boaters Float Plan](#)**

**APPENDIX D**  
**VESSEL SAFETY CHECKLIST**



# VESSEL SAFETY CHECKLIST

## VESSEL CHECKS

- Check battery switch
- Check fluids (engine oil, fuel, coolant)
- Check fuel line
- Check navigation and running lights
- Check bilges and bilge pump
- Anchor and rode
- Dock lines and floats
- Boat hook and mooring lines
- Paddle
- Tools, spare parts, and knife
- Test steering for ease of movement
- Stow and secure gear

## SAFETY EQUIPMENT

- Check weather report
- Marine VHF
- Cell phone
- Compass/GPS and charts
- PFDs (each passenger and throwable)
- Fire extinguisher
- First aid kit
- Foul weather gear bailing device
- Safety whistle
- Visual signaling devices
- Bailing device or bucket
- Flashlight

**APPENDIX E**  
**EMERGENCY CALL PROCEDURES GUIDE**

## **WATERCRAFT EMERGENCY CALL PROCEDURES**

1. Tune Marine VHF Radio to Channel 16.
2. Follow this call method:
  - a. Distress signal "MAYDAY" spoken three times.
  - b. The words "THIS IS" spoken one time.
  - c. Name of vessel in distress spoken three times.
  - d. Call sign or boat registration number spoken once.
  - e. Repeat "MAYDAY" and name of vessel spoken once.
  - f. Give position of vessel by latitude and longitude (preferable) or by bearing (Note: true or magnetic, and state which) and distance to a well-known landmark such as a navigational aid. Use whatever features you can to make your location known if you do not have a GPS or compass.
  - g. Include information on vessel movement – course, speed, and destination.
  - h. Give nature of distress (e.g., fire, injury, sinking, etc.).
  - i. Kind of assistance required.
  - j. Number of passengers onboard.
  - k. Any additional information that may facilitate rescue, such as number of injured passengers and nature of injuries.
  - l. The word "OVER" spoken one time.
  - m. Repeat at intervals until an answer is received.
3. Stay by the radio, if possible. Transmitting a signal from a radio may help rescuers hone in on vessel location.

### **EXAMPLE MAYDAY CALL**

**MAYDAY-MAYDAY-MAYDAY**

**THIS IS FRIAR-FRIAR-FRIAR RI1234**

**MAYDAY FRIAR**

**POINT JUDITH LIGHT BEARS 185 DEGREES MAGNETIC – DISTANCE 2 MILES**

**STRUCK SUBMERGED OBJECT-NEEDS PUMPS MEDICAL ASSISTANCE AND TOW**

**THREE ADULTS ONBOARD**

**ONE PERSON COMPOUND FRACTURE OF ARM**

**ESTIMATE CAN REMAIN AFLOAT TWO HOURS**

**FRIAR IS 16 FOOT ALUMINUM FISHING BOAT**

**OVER**

**APPENDIX F**

**RHODE ISLAND BOATING ACCIDENT FORM**

**RI Department of Environmental**

**Management: [Boating Accident Report](#)**



PROVIDENCE  
COLLEGE

## **APPENDIX G**

### **ON-THE-JOB INJURY FORM**



**ON-THE-JOB INJURY REPORT**

**EMPLOYEE INFORMATION**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title/Department: \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred Medical Facility:** Urgent Care:  
Concentra  
290 Branch Avenue  
Providence, RI 02904  
Phone: (401) 722-8880

Banner ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

**INJURY INFORMATION**

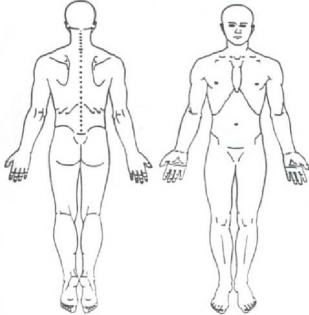
Date of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_ AM PM  
Date Supervisor Notified: \_\_\_\_\_ Time Workday Began: \_\_\_\_\_ AM PM  
First full day lost from work: \_\_\_\_\_ Has employee returned to work?  Yes  No  
Did the injury occur on campus?  Yes  No Date returned to work: \_\_\_\_\_  
Exact Location where injury occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe work activities at the time of the incident and how the injury occurred:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Circle the Affected Body Part(s):**

Left Right Right Left



**Describe the nature of the injury (e.g., sprain, burn, etc.):**

Note: Describe all injuries sustained during the incident, in order of severity.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MEDICAL INFORMATION**

Treatment Facility: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**WITNESS INFORMATION**

Note: List all individuals (PC and contractor) present at the incident.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**APPENDIX H**  
**STUDENT INJURY REPORT FORM**

## Student Injury Report Form

Directions: Submit to the Department Chair and the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at [king16@providence.edu](mailto:king16@providence.edu) within 24 hours of the injury.

Name of Injured Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Injury: \_\_\_\_\_

Where Injury Occurred: Building: \_\_\_\_\_ Room Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of the injury:

Description of how the injury took place:

Action taken in response to the injury:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Injured Person

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Supervising Faculty Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Received by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date