

Updated May 31, 2021

Return to Sailing and COVID-19 Public Health and Safety Measures for Sailing Clubs and Members

As the sailing season opens up across the country to various degrees depending on the province, COVID-19 is still a threat to the health and wellbeing of our members. These documents produced last year have been reviewed and updated where applicable. The recommendations and guidelines made last year are still relevant and can protect the health of members.

The recommendation only applies after your provincial or municipal authorities allow sailing activities to occur.

As more and more Canadians get vaccinated we hope to see the infection rates continue to decline and we can have a normal sailing season in Canada. Until then we recommend you continue to follow these guidelines and those produced by your provincial sailing association. The health and wellbeing of our members continues to be a priority.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Sail Canada's and the Provincial Sailing Association's advice has always been to respect and abide by the Government of Canada's direction to carefully follow physical distancing practices and to respect the directives and regulations of all Public Health Authorities and provincial and regional governments. The sailing community can be a role model for others on how to avoid the spread of the virus. We encourage all sailing clubs to consider their own situation at any given time. A club's decision to open and allow sailing activities needs to be based on the current situation and advice/recommendations provided by your Provincial Sailing Association, Provincial public health authorities and your regional/local government. Please keep yourself informed of your local directives and preventive measures on the spread of the Coronavirus and follow guidelines provided by Provincial Health Authorities and your provincial sailing association.

As we have experienced over the past year, things seem to be going well one moment and can change very quickly. Please remember to proceed with caution and be prepared to be nimble as things may change from day to day.

Sail Canada continues to work closely with the Provincial Sailing Associations and its COVID-19 Health and Return to Sailing Task Force comprised of a team of medical and scientific experts to provide recommendations and guidance to the sailing community. We understand that different parts of the country are going to open up at different times depending on the local situation and so we ask that you continue to be aware of what your provincial or local authorities are allowing and abide by those directives before resuming activities at the club. Your Provincial Sailing Association may have more specific measures to follow. The situation

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continues to be fluid, and your Provincial Sailing Association will continue to provide appropriate updates in each province as they develop.

Most of our sailing members are well educated now on the transmission of COVID-19. So a number of the guidelines may now seem like common sense. However as a friendly reminder it is good to review the guidelines from time to time.

Each person should know the symptoms of the disease that are updated from time to time:
Symptoms of COVID-19

- It is extremely important that anyone who is exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 or has been exposed to the virus must stay at home for 14 days. See link for symptoms <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html>
- If a person feels sick or has a temperature over 100.4 F or 38 C degrees, they should stay home.
- Anyone who has come into contact with someone who has shown symptoms must also stay at home
- If they have travelled out of county they should be quarantining for 14 days and be tested
- Ask members to do a daily health check and self-assessment screening <https://ca.thrive.health/covid19/en> (however, be aware that they may be pre-symptomatic or asymptomatic)
- People may be infected with COVID-19 and not show symptoms immediately, or at all.
 - Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure to COVID-19. This is the longest known incubation period for this disease.
 - Evidence indicates that the virus can be transmitted to others from someone who is infected but not showing any symptoms. This includes people who:
 - a) have not yet developed symptoms (pre-symptomatic)
 - b) never develop symptoms (asymptomatic)
- Anyone displaying symptoms at the club should be given public health contact information and asked to leave immediately.

Medical experts know that these kinds of transmissions are happening among those in close contact or in close physical settings. This means it is extremely important to follow the proven [preventative measures](#).

When your club is given the green light to prepare or resume activities in your province and region, Sail Canada along with its provincial partners, have created the following recommendations and guidelines to help you re-integrate back to the sport of sailing. There are numerous sources of information available, so we have tried to make it simple and understandable.

****Disclaimer: The guidelines and recommendations in this document are not legal or medical advice. Given the extremely fluid environment of COVID-19, all guidelines and recommendations are subject to change.***

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Sail Canada and the Provincial Sailing Associations have also developed a Risk Assessment Guide.

Keep in mind the following core principles when conducting Club or sailing activities.

- 1) Ask members to stay home if they have any symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in contact with someone who has or had the virus in the previous 14 days. See link for symptoms <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/symptoms.html>
- 2) Even for members who appear to be healthy and have had no contact with someone who is at-risk, it is still important to follow physical distancing and sanitation practices
 - Use sanitary practices recommended by the public health authorities.
 - a) Practice proper hygiene as it can help reduce the risk of infection or spreading infection to others.
 - b) Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after using the washroom and when preparing food – or use alcohol-based [hand sanitizer](#) if soap and water are not available (have these readily available or ask members to bring their own).
 - c) Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
 - d) The Coronavirus that causes COVID-19 spreads through droplets that people produce as they breathe, talk, cough and sneeze.
 - e) When coughing or sneezing:
 - Cough or sneeze into a tissue or the bend of your arm, not your hand.
 - Use a tissue and dispose of any used tissues as soon as possible in a lined waste basket and wash your hands afterwards.
- 3) Keep Physical Distancing of 2 m or 6 feet:
 - a) Maintain a distance of at least 2 metres/6 ft from other people at all times when feasible to do so. If sailing with another member, who is not part of your household, follow any local guidelines and ensure you do prescreening of each other before sailing together and if feasible get tested before you sail together .
 - b) More than 2 metres/6ft is recommended if others are coughing or sneezing.
 - c) Pay particular attention to high-traffic areas in the club. These are good places to have physical distancing reminders posted in the languages used in your club.
 - d) Have physical reminders in the club of what 2 metres/6 ft looks like, such as a couple of swim noodles or sticks, or lay tape/markers on the floor to show the intervals.
 - e) If your club normally sets up places for people to congregate such as seating, dining, or meeting areas, block them off or don't put out the seating.
 - f) Do not allow members to move seats or tables.
 - g) Arrange a schedule so that spacing can be maintained and each club should determine the safe number of people in the club at any given time to make physical distancing possible. Ensure all members know the maximum number of people allowed in line with local regulations and suggestions.
- 4) Wash common contact surfaces after/before use.

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- Sanitation practices should follow the Canadian Government guidelines for cleaning hard surfaces - <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html>
- 5) Wear a mask (not a buff or bandana) if in close contact with others (surgical procedure mask and K-N95 and N-95 mask recommended). Masks don't replace proper physical distancing. Remember that the COVID-19 virus is transmitted through aerosol transmission so not only is wearing mask and physical distance important but try to limit and reduce your exposure time in or avoidance of small or poorly ventilated rooms or areas. It is recommended that you wear a mask while sailing. Remind members that if they accidentally end up in the water to immediately remove their mask to facilitate easier breathing and swimming.

Note - buffs and bandanas are not safe – research has shown that they may even be more contagious since particles get embedded in fabric and lead to the build up of moisture which can lead to a greater expulsion of droplets into the air. (Fischer et al. (2020)

- 6) Avoid large groups where social distancing is not feasible and follow municipal or provincial requirements.
- 7) Don't touch or use other people's tools or equipment.
- 8) Remind members not to share personal water bottles, food, gear, etc.

Further recommended solutions that can be customized to work within each province region and club to meet the above requirements are listed below.

- Parents or guardians who bring children to the club are responsible for following the guidelines and for sanitizing any tools used by their children.
- Some staff may not feel safe working alone. If so, do not require them to work alone but ensure physical distancing across people from different households.
- Members should plan ahead, use techniques that reduce labour, and minimize the number of trips they make to the club/boat.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Options

- Provide handwashing stations and/or hand sanitizer in key areas. Anyone entering the club grounds should wash their hands before entering and upon leaving.
 - Post Public Health information on handwashing and hand sanitizers
- Soap is very effective at killing the COVID-19 virus if proper handwashing procedure is followed. Ensure all club members know how to wash hands properly for 20 seconds.
- Staff should clean all shared equipment following a cleaning protocol and frequent cleaning schedule.
- Identify and disinfect surfaces **before and after** use,
 - Ensure everyone is responsible for disinfecting all identified surfaces before and after each use.
- For disinfecting, use a sanitizing solution of either 75% or higher alcohol-based product or bleach at a concentration of 20ml/.4 teaspoons per litre. Diluted bleach has a shelf life of 24 hours, so mix a fresh batch every day.
- Please exercise caution when disposing of wet paper towels and other exposed materials and put in garbage bags.

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Fight myth-information - go to trusted sources like the Government of Canada COVID-19 website <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection.html>, your local public health unit or World Health Organization <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>

- Place posters with Sailing Club COVID-19 policies and recommended measures around the club.
- Post a public notice outside club entry points indicating the club is closed to the public, only authorized members are permitted.
 - Include a statement that members have been trained (through videos) in COVID-19 safety protocols and agree to abide by them (so public understands why some people are allowed in the club)
- Crises like a pandemic increase tensions and anxiety. We can best respond with understanding calmness and compassion.
 - Have a system in place to support mediating conflict in the club.
 - Counter misinformation and racist or xenophobic remarks.

Planning

- It is very important to have a dedicated decision-maker or team responsible for communicating with club members, getting signed agreements and responding to members who do not comply with guidelines.
- People who have been assigned tasks may fall ill or need to go into self-isolation. Have a backup plan for club access (allocations) and maintenance in case the person in charge of those things needs to self-isolate.

Caution/Warning

- It is very important to remember we are not over this pandemic yet. Exercise caution and continue to follow health guidelines as published by your local health authorities.

Now the Good News

Sailing like other outdoor activities and especially water sports can be a low COVID-19 risk activity if the above steps are taken.

Don't take chances - Be safe, Be well – Together we will get through this!

GUIDELINES
ONCE ACTIVITIES are PERMITTED BY PUBLIC HEALTH AUTHORITIES

<p>When Launching a boat or having members in the boat yard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure access to facilities are secure; accessing and following of COVID-19 rules/guidelines and safety protocols should be monitored and enforced by staff, management, and/or a designated “safety officer”. • Limit access to slip spaces to passengers/crew boarding that boat. • With trailers transporting boats, caution should be taken when unloading and loading boats to maintain physical distance. • Create shifts for people to be in the yard to work on their boats to limit congestion • Consider using tape (or other suitable weather-proof markings) to mark Safe Distancing spaces on docks, slips, and other areas of grounds/facilities. • Minimize the number of people in the area at any one time • Avoid the common courtesy of helping others with their lines or accepting help unless there is an immediate need to avoid injury or damage. Wash hands or use sanitizer after handling someone else’s boat or lines. • Sanitize surfaces frequently. If using a crane, have one operator for the day and then sanitize the surface in the evening or, if more than one operator, each time a different person operates the crane. • Wear a mask not a buff or bandana • Allow for safe Social Distancing when loading, unloading, and when waiting on the docks and ramps. • Schedule when people can go in the water and when they can come out to avoid more than one boat being docked at a time • Avoid sharing tools or equipment – if shared disinfect affected tools after use
<p>Modified use of Club/Recreation Facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs/Divisions/PTSOs should consult Provincial/Municipal Health authorities to understand the local risks and implications of resuming sailing activities, in addition to the use of club facilities or any public areas to support outdoor activity. This may include removal of boats/equipment, accessing public waterways. • If the activity is being organized at a location other than an organization’s conventional sailing locations, all potential restrictions or considerations for the place of meeting/launching should be understood. • Instructors should arrive ahead of participants and prepare the club environment/safety boats/facility. • Sailors should not enter facilities except where and when necessary, and anyone entering a facility should follow all relevant guidance in relation to physical distancing, limiting contact with surfaces, and facility managers should follow sanitation guidelines (see below.) • A necessary reason to enter a facility could be related to safety, sanitary or health reasons. • Create and mark/post signage for one-way entering and exit pathways. • Sailors should arrive wearing their sailing clothing when possible. • Discourage the use of water fountains and shared water filling stations/containers. • Anticipate an increase in trash/waste, which will require more frequent waste removal plans; some waste may be considered “Medical Waste” and require special handling.

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<p>Group Gathering/Training Size</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training group size, including all sailors, coaches/leaders and required safety personnel, must respect Provincial/Municipal group gathering size restrictions. • Create a system for record keeping to track individuals time at the club in the event that a sailor/club/staff member develops COVID-19 symptoms • Refer to local guidelines for group size. Be up-to-date with your local recommendations for maximum group gatherings as it relates to COVID-19. • Consider reducing the student/instructor ratio of any CANSail classes and training groups. • Have staggered starts to avoid congestion on ramps. • Remind members not to share personal water bottles, food, gear, equipment, sunscreen, towels, PFDs, etc. • Debrief training sessions outdoors, or using, Zoom meetings, telephone or other electronic means that allows physical distancing.
<p>Physical Distance (2 metres/6 ft)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always maintain 2 metres/6 ft between all individuals before, during and after sailing. • If shuttling participants from start to finish points is a necessary part of the planned sailing activity, all measures should be taken to ensure this can happen while maintaining physical distancing where possible, and further risk mitigation must be put into effect if it is not (for example, wearing of masks while in vehicles.) • Sailors should prepare and get on the water while remaining physically distanced (one person on the ramp at a time, if possible) • Crew size should be in accordance with local guidelines • If a boat can accommodate 2 metres of physical distance, crew members who are not from the same household but choose to sail together under these circumstances, should avoid all unnecessary contact • Be conscious while on the water to respect physical distance between boats. • Use caution, be courteous, and practice safe Social Distancing when passing by others on docks, ramps, slips, bridges, and other tight locations.
<p>Sanitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All surfaces, which may be touched by multiple individuals, should be sanitized before and after each outing. • Club PFDs should be assigned to an individual sailor for the duration of public health measures and kept separate from other equipment and brought home. • Wash Hands frequently (Encourage members to have their own wash bucket with water and soap on the ground or sanitizers and carry environmentally friendly soap on your boat or sanitizers) <p>Sanitation practices should follow the Canadian Government guidelines for cleaning hard surfaces - https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19.html</p>
<p>Safety Contingencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants are strongly encouraged to wear a Government of Canada approved PFD at all times while in the boat, irrespective of their age or swimming ability. • Responding to an incident on or off the water (sailor in the water/other injury) may cause the responsible person to come in physical contact with the sailor. As such leaders should always have masks and hand sanitizer available to protect themselves, and sailors, should contact become necessary. • During this time, unnecessary risks should be avoided. Sailors and coaches/leaders should be prudent and avoid any situation which involves undue risk and the potential need for emergency personnel to respond, or that unnecessary personal contact becomes necessary.
<p>Sailing Activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check your local guidelines as to permissible group size • Where possible sail with members of your own family or bubble

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<p style="text-align: center;">Staffing, Communication & Governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sailors, guardians, and all relevant community members should be fully informed of all measures so that procedures can be safely followed at all times. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Educate and train employees/staff on understanding what COVID-19 is, what the symptoms are, how it spreads, how to use PPE, and how they can take precautions not to contract COVID-19. ○ Communicate to employees/staff clear expectations for adhering to Social Distancing guidelines, PPE requirements, and health checks. Provide necessary training. • Relevant signage and marking should be put into place so that all measures are easy to follow and that participants are continually reminded of the modifications required. • Member organizations should ensure participants are properly registered and insured, proper waivers have been signed and all other normal membership considerations have been taken into account. • Form a COVID-19 Task Force to make decisions related to operations, cancellations, and implementations of COVID-19 guidelines. Suggestions for whom to include on this team are club leaders, general manager, an attorney, a medical professional, JR Sailing representative, Fleet Captain, etc • Comply with all Federal, Provincial, and Local laws, guidelines, executive orders, mandates, and public health guidelines, as they relate to COVID-19. • Consult with your Regional Department of Health and local health departments. • Follow Transport Canada Guidelines for your local area. • Non-Members and Guests – Determine what your club’s policy will be regarding non-member and guest access to the club’s facilities, programs, and events during COVID-19. Determine if Waivers will be required and how policies will be enforced. Communicate this information clearly to your members. • Put in place policies for handling situations when members or employees/staff do not follow the club’s rules/guidelines for COVID-19 safety. Consider not allowing access to those who do not follow the rules. • Clubs should reach out to their insurance providers to discuss the organizations insurance coverage. • Create a system/record keeping to track members time at the club in the event that a sailor/club/staff member develops COVID-19 symptoms, - the club will be able to inform members if they need to self-isolate and the tracking records will assist local health authorities with notification and contact tracing • Where feasible clubs could appoint an On-site Safety Officers during peak activity times whose sole purpose is to ensure that personnel are following the rules/guidelines, as sailors/instructors may inadvertently violate procedures especially when focusing on one individual, and having a separate set of eyes to monitor the overall situation could help avoid these.
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Consult the Sail Canada COVID 19 page on the website as well as your Provincial Sailing Association’s website for relevant Federal, Provincial and COVID-19 public health source

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