

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Fish and Game



FISHING AND BOATING ACCESS
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Memorandum

From: Department of Fish and Game – Office of Fishing and Boating Access

Date: April 30, 2020

Subject: Inland and Coastal Boat Ramp Guidelines

Greetings,

As you are well aware, almost every aspect of our lives and activities have been impacted by the coronavirus and the Covid-19 state of emergency. Since your municipality has one or more boat access facilities managed by the Department of Fish and Game-Office of Fishing and Boating Access, I want to share with you the new state guidelines for boating and related activities issued by our parent agency, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. <https://www.mass.gov/doc/boating-guidance/download>

Also attached is signage (coastal and inland boat ramps) that should be posted at your boat access facilities during Governor Baker's stay at home advisory. Please share this information with all departments and personnel who are involved with oversight of your boat access sites.

I hope that you and your family are fairing well during this difficult time. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding this guidance or have anything else you wish to discuss concerning your boat access management.

COVID-19 EMERGENCY

COASTAL BOAT RAMPS

USER GUIDELINES

- **This boat access facility is open for use by boats being launched by vehicles registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.**
- **All ramps remain open subject to available parking.** A ramp will be considered closed if all parking is full and illegally parked vehicles may be towed.
- **Coastal boat ramp parking lots are open for users launching boats, canoes and kayaks, and associated parking. Parking for purposes of accessing coastal beaches is prohibited.**
- **All boat ramps and canoe launch users shall practice social distancing.** Users should allow appropriate space for users of the boat ramp or launch and clear the ramp when users launch is complete.
- **Users should ensure they are ready to depart quickly from the ramp or dock as soon as their boat is put in the water.** Users not actively launching their boats should clear the launch area.
- Upon return to ramp, users should load their boats as quickly and safely as possible and then clear the launch area.
- **Use of the ramps for organized fishing tournaments, derbies, or any other type of gathering is prohibited.**
- **Loitering on ramps or use of ramps for any activity other than launching boats is prohibited.** Parking for activities other than launching boats is prohibited.
- **Masks or face-coverings should be worn in public** in accordance with the Department of Public Health's advisory when social distancing is not possible.

RECREATIONAL BOATING

- **Only persons from the same household should be together on a boat.**
- **No gathering or groups of persons from multiple households will be permitted** on boat ramps, docks, piers etc., and all users shall practice social distancing.
- **All recreational boating is subject to the discretion of local officials, harbor masters, and law enforcement.**
- **All local rules, regulations, laws and Coast Guard requirements still apply.**

For hire boating will not be permitted. This includes charter and hired boat fishing, whale watches and other pleasure cruises, sailboat rentals and lessons, canoe, kayak, and stand-up paddleboard rentals, and any other operation or use of a vessel that is not registered to the passenger.



COVID-19 EMERGENCY

Inland Boat Ramp/Canoe Launch

User Guidelines

- **This boat access facility is open for use by boats being launched by vehicles registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.**
- **Ramps remain open subject to available parking.** A ramp will be considered closed if all parking is full. Illegally parked cars may be towed.
- **All boat ramps and canoe launch users shall practice social distancing.** Users should allow appropriate space for users of the boat ramp or launch and clear the ramp when users launch is complete.
- **Users should ensure they are ready to depart quickly from the ramp or dock as soon as their boat is put in the water.** Users not actively launching their boats should clear the launch area.
- Upon return to ramp, users should load their boats as quickly and safely as possible and then clear the launch area.
- **Use of the ramps for organized fishing tournaments, derbies, or any other type of gathering is prohibited.**
- **Loitering on ramps or use of ramps for any activity other than launching boats is prohibited.** Parking for activities other than launching boats is prohibited.
- **Masks or face-coverings should be worn in public** in accordance with the Department of Public Health's advisory when social distancing is not possible.

RECREATIONAL BOATING

- **Only persons from the same household should be together on a boat.**
- **No gathering or groups of persons from multiple households will be permitted** on boat ramps, docks, piers etc., and all users shall practice social distancing.
- **All recreational boating is subject to the discretion of local officials, harbormasters, and law enforcement.**
- **All local rules, regulations, laws and Coast Guard requirements still apply.**

For hire boating will not be permitted. This includes charter boat fishing, pleasure cruises, canoe, kayak, and stand-up paddleboard rentals, white water rafting and river tubing rentals, and any other operation or use of a vessel that is not registered to the passenger.

