

Great Bay Rowing

Safety Policy

Effective: June 1, 2026

Policy Directive

1. Great Bay Rowing (GBR) follows US Rowing Safety Guidelines.
2. Coaches, launch operators, coxswains, coached rowers, and logbook rowers are appropriately trained and qualified.
3. Coached programs launch only when all Required Rowing Conditions are satisfied.
4. Logbook rowers are responsible for deciding if it is safe to row, based on the policies outline herein.
5. All rowing shells launching from Jacksons Landing may not enter the "bay" (pass beyond Wagon Hill kayak launch) unless accompanied by a coaching launch.

Responsibilities and Qualifications

Rowing Director

Responsibilities

1. Establish and maintain minimum rowing ratios and acceptable weather parameters.
2. Maintain safety training, qualifications, and licensure records.
3. Follow and Enforce GBR Safety Policy and Guidelines.
4. Ensure that all launch, trailer, and rowing equipment is maintained and in proper working order.

Qualifications

1. Licensed to operate commercial watercraft in accordance with the New Hampshire Department of Safety Regulations.
2. Certified in CPR, First Aid, and AED.
3. Appropriate rowing expertise or qualifications as determined by the Board President.
4. Intimately familiar with the rowing operating area and highly knowledgeable of the information on the nautical chart of the rowing operating area, including hazards and landmarks.
5. Completed USOC Safe Sport Training.

Coach

Responsibilities

1. Follow and Enforce GBR Safety Policy and Guidelines.
2. Verify and document that Required Rowing Conditions are met prior to every launch.
3. Wear a USCG approved PFD when operating a launch. Ensure passengers do the same.

Qualifications

1. Licensed to operate commercial watercraft in accordance with the New Hampshire Department of Safety Regulations.
2. Trained on each launch operation and equipment by the Rowing Director or appropriate Board Member.
3. Certified in CPR, First Aid, and AED.
4. Appropriate rowing expertise or qualifications as determined by the Board President or Rowing Director.
5. Intimately familiar with the rowing operating area and highly knowledgeable of the information on the nautical chart of the rowing operating area, including hazards and landmarks.
6. Completed USOC Safe Sport Training.

Launch Operator:

Responsibilities

1. Follow New Hampshire laws and regulations related to the operation of commercial watercraft.
2. Maintain control of the launch, and all passengers.
3. Wear a USCG approved PFD when operating a launch. Ensure passengers do the same.
4. Notify the senior coach of adverse weather conditions.

Qualifications

1. Licensed to operate commercial watercraft in accordance New Hampshire Department of Safety Regulations
2. Trained on each launch operation and equipment by the Rowing Director or appropriate Board Member.
3. Intimately familiar with the rowing operating area and highly knowledgeable of the information on the nautical chart of the rowing operating area, including hazards and landmarks.
4. Certified in CPR, First Aid, and AED.

Coxswain:

Responsibilities

1. Watch the US Rowing Safety Video once annually.
2. Take charge of the boat.
3. Know traffic patterns and hazards of the rowing area. If rowing in an unfamiliar area, attendance at the coxswains meeting is mandatory.
4. Launch only when they are in possession of the required safety equipment and are aware of the tidal conditions.
5. Be aware of changing weather conditions and notify a coach immediately if noticed.
6. Exercise good seamanship.
7. Notify a coach immediately of any injury or accident on the shell.
8. Report equipment discrepancies to the coach.

Qualifications

1. Complete coxswain training program conducted by coaches or the Rowing Director, including rowing operations area familiarization launch ride.
2. Designated as qualified by the Rowing Director.
3. Familiar with the rowing operating area and knowledgeable of the information on the nautical chart of the rowing operating area, including hazards and landmarks.

Coached Rower:

Responsibilities

1. Watch the US Rowing Safety Video once annually.
2. Follow GBR Safety Policy and Guidelines.
3. Check and be responsible for all the equipment associated with their seat before launching
4. Maintain proper hydration, wear appropriate clothing, and report immediately any medical conditions or illness that may impact the ability to row.
5. Always Wear appropriate footwear (at practice and regattas) when not in the boat or actively launching.
6. Report equipment discrepancies to the coach.

Qualifications

1. Complete a swimming test.
2. Know how to adjust and maintain equipment associated with their seat.
3. Basic familiarity with the nautical chart of the rowing operating area.

Logbook Rower and Private Boat Owner

Responsibilities

1. Watch the US Rowing Safety Video once annually.
2. Follow GBR Safety Policy and Guidelines.
3. Report GBR-owned equipment discrepancies to the Rowing Director.
4. Log in before and promptly log back out after rowing independently.

Qualifications

1. Pass Written Captain's Test before being granted access to any club owned shells and pass Practical Captain's Test before being granted access to any club owned racing shell.
2. Pass swim test or complete a waiver.
3. Familiar with the rowing operating area and knowledgeable of the information on the nautical chart of the rowing operating area, including hazards and landmarks.
4. Complete rowing operations area familiarization launch ride with the coaches or Rowing Director, prior to taking out any club owned shell.
5. All logbook rowers and private boat owners using GBR facilities shall be 18 years or older.

Launch Operations

1. Launch operators, coaches, rowers, and passengers shall wear USCG approved personal floatation devices when afloat in a launch.
2. Launches shall be operated in a safe and professional manner and shall not be used for any recreational purpose other than as a rowing launch.
3. No more than two passengers ride in a coach boat at any time.
4. The safety launch motor is started to ensure proper operation before the crew leaves the dock.
5. Launches shall remain in visual contact with the shell(s) under supervision. Shells shall not leave the launch area until at least one launch is operational.
6. Gasoline shall only be stored in approved containers in good repair. Gasoline stored indoors shall only be stored in an approved flammable liquids cabinet.

Equipment

1. A first aid kit and AED shall be present on premises during all dry land and on-water practices or regattas.
2. Launches shall operate only when equipped with the full complement of required safety equipment.
3. Launches shall be equipped with hypothermia kits when operating in cold water conditions.
4. A nautical chart of the rowing operating area, annotated with recognizable landmarks and important hazards, shall be present at operating locations

Rowing Operations – Coached Programs

1. The launching of shells shall only occur after the Rowing Director or Senior Coach present demonstrates and documents that all Required Rowing Conditions are met. The Rowing Director shall publish coaches' seniority at the beginning of each season.
2. The Required Rowing Conditions shall be (**WCRP**):
 - a. **W** Weather: Weather conditions are acceptable. All of the following parameters shall be met for weather to be considered acceptable:
 - i. The sum of the water and the air temperature shall be a minimum of 90°F, for the launch of singles or pairs;
 - ii. The sum of the water and the air temperature shall be a minimum of 75°F, for the launch of doubles, quads, fours, or eights;
 - iii. The air temperature shall be a minimum of 32°F for the launch of any shell, regardless of water temperature.
 - iv. Visibility shall be a minimum of 100 yards;
 - v. Generally, wind speed (including frequent gusts) shall be a maximum of 20 MPH;
 - vi. Whitecaps shall not be present; and
 - vii. No thunderstorm warnings are posted (or thunderstorm watches that predict the presence of lightning in the rowing operating area during the intended

practice period), lightning is not detected within 25 miles; and there is no visible or audible lightning or thunder present.

- b. **C**ommunications: Communications among all launch operators and coaches is established;
 - c. **R**atios: Minimum coach and launch ratios are satisfied; 10-1 ratios for athletes on the water to coaches on the water, with understanding that there are times a coach's discretion will come into play given the experience level of a group and the given conditions at the launch site.
 - d. **P**FD: There is a minimum of one USCG approved PFD in the launches for each rower on the water.
3. At the discretion of the Rowing Director or Senior Coach present, coxswains shall wear a USCG approved floatation device or exposure suit when conditions require cold weather shoes or clothing that could impede the ability to float or swim.
 4. The Rowing Director or Senior Coach Present is authorized to decide not to launch, even if the Required Rowing Conditions are met, if in their judgement an unsafe or unknown condition exists.
 5. Any coach or launch operator is authorized to direct a shell back to the boathouse, or to another safe location, in the event that, at their sole discretion, unsafe conditions are discovered or develop while on the water.
 6. All program participants shall have and wear, always, appropriate footwear at all rowing (including practice and regatta) venues, except when in rowing shells or actively launching.
 7. The experience of the coached rowers shall be considered in the decision as to whether to launch.

Rowing Operations – Logbook and Private Boat Programs

1. Logbook rowers and private boat owners shall assess conditions prior to launch, and make the decision if it is safe to row (**WCP**):
 - a. **W**eather: As indicated above;
 - b. **C**ommunications: Log in, and promptly log out, of the logbook. Consistent with US Rowing Guidelines, it is recommended that logbook rowers have a cell phone in a waterproof bag;
 - c. **P**FD: Consistent with US Rowing Guidelines, it is recommended that logbook rowers have a PFD on the boat.
2. Logbook rowers display bow and stern running lights when required by law. If rowing 30 minutes before sunset or 30 minutes after sunrise, logbook rowers shall not launch without bow and stern lights on the boat.

Fire and emergency

1. In case of fire or emergency, do not hesitate to call 911 (or hail the USCG on VHF=16 as appropriate). When in doubt, call.

2. The Durham boathouse address is Jackson's Landing, Old Piscataqua Rd., Durham, NH.
3. The Hilton Park Launch Area address is Hilton Park, on Hilton Park Road.
4. The Rowing Director and Board President shall be notified as soon as practical, and in no case more than two hours, of any injury or accident to any person engaging in club activities or on club property, that requires medical attention, causes more than \$500 of property damage, or could result in an insurance claim against any of the Great Bay Rowing or US Rowing Insurance Policies. A US Rowing Incident Report shall be completed and filed with the Rowing Director within 48 hours. Incident reports involving serious injury shall include witness statements. All incident reports shall be provided to the US Rowing Insurance Program Administrator after review by the Board President and Rowing Director. All incident reports shall be kept on file for a minimum of three years. The Board President will determine, at the time the incident report is filed, if further investigation is warranted, and if so, shall commence an investigation.

Enforcement

1. Fines or other enforcement actions levied against launch operators are the responsibility of the launch operator.
2. Failure of members to follow the Great Bay Rowing Safety Policy and Guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including and up to suspension of club privileges or termination of membership, as determined by the Board President. Generally, infractions will follow a "Three Strike" policy, that is: First infraction, written warning; Second infraction, 1 month suspension; Third infraction; membership termination. The Board President may, however, in cases of significant violation, suspend or terminate a member without warning. Terminations may be appealed to the full Board of Directors.
3. Failure of coaches or the Rowing Director to follow the Great Bay Rowing Safety Policy and Guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including and up to termination, at the sole discretion of the Board President.