



## *Friends of Detroit Rowing*

# **POLICY Visibility & Inclement Weather Conditions**

Version 1.0

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## **SECTION A**

**1. Policy Expiration:**

This policy has no expiration date and is in effect until amended.

**2. Overall Policy Purpose:**

Outline program and athlete requirements for all FODR programs.

**3. Responsible Parties:**

This policy applies to all FODR/DBCC staff & program participants. Programs include but are not limited to: Juniors (J), Middle School (MS), U23, Collegiate (C), Masters (M), Learn to Row (LTR), Rec Rowing (R), Stem to Stern (S2S), and Private Scullers (P), and all visiting rowers.

**4. Reporting:**

All incidents should be reported immediately to the Rowing Operations Board Member, Safety Committee Chair or Safety Committee member (verbally or via email.) The Safety Committee Member will take the statement about the incident and complete a formal Safety Incident Form. These will be discussed at committee meetings and actions taken.

Email: [FODRSafety@FriendsOfDetroitRowing.com](mailto:FODRSafety@FriendsOfDetroitRowing.com)

**5. Penalties for Violation:**

Penalties for violations of this policy will result in an “Incident Report” being placed on file with FODR identifying the offending parties. Sanctions can range from a warning, being placed on probation, possible suspension, to dismissal from rowing programs.

**6. Policy Conditions:**

All FODR/DBCC staff & program is expected to know and follow the FODR/DBCC Visibility & Inclement Weather Conditions policy. This policy is in effect during all water-based training sessions for all programs: J, MS, U23, C, M, LTR, R, S2S, P, etc.

## **SECTION B - INCLEMENT WEATHER & LIGHT CONDITIONS**

Rowing conditions can change quickly in Detroit. Coaches will ultimately decide on the weather conditions and may make the decision that boats cannot launch. Changing conditions can cause boats to capsize, hit hazards in the water, or encounter dangerous waves. The USCG Belle Isle

Dashboard, found at [weather.gov](http://weather.gov), can be used for specific marine watches, warnings, advisories and detailed wind and wave forecasts.

1. **Multiple Programs** : When multiple programs are present all coaches need to come to a universal agreement on whether to launch boats.
2. **EVERY ROWER** is empowered to decide not to row if they do not feel comfortable or safe in any weather condition. ANY ROWER who feels conditions are unsafe should verbalize their concerns and be respectfully heard by the coach. Every rower should be able to assess the weather conditions before deciding to launch.
3. **Wind Precautions** –DBCC/FODR Wind Limits: Will not launch if winds are greater than 14 mph from West. If sudden winds come up, return to the boathouse if the trip is safe, or take the boat to the nearest shore and wait for the winds to calm.
4. **Lightning & Thunder Precautions/Prevention.**
  - a) Do not launch if thunder is heard within the past 20 minutes
  - b) Do not launch if you see quickly darkening skies
  - c) If you are on the water and see lightning, hear thunder, or notice your hair standing on end with static electricity: Head for the nearest shore immediately. Get out of the boat and water immediately. Do not handle the boat.
5. **Wakes & Waves Precautions/Prevention** – If the water is white-capping or too rough, do not launch.
6. **SUMMARY** there will be no rowing, regardless of lighting conditions and or visibility, if:
  - a) White caps are visible
  - b) 14+ mph wind from the west
  - c) Lightning is seen or thunder heard

## **SECTION C - SHELL AND LAUNCH LIGHTING**

1. **Navigation Lights:** All boats (rowing shells, launches, etc.) are required to have properly functioning marine navigation lights for use between the hours of sunset and sunrise and during periods of restricted/limited visibility, such as fog and heavy rain.
  - a. Practice during the fall starting at 4:30 must use lights or return to the dock before dusk.
  - b. Marine Navigation Lights: All boats must be equipped with properly configured Coast Guard certified navigation lights:
    - Bow Light: Red / Green navigation light
    - Stern Light: Solid or flashing white light
2. **Mounting of the Lights - Rowing Shells**
  - a) **All Rowing Shells** - Bow Lights: All bow lights must be mounted directly to the rowing shell. It is recommended that they are mounted using the lane marker holder or a suction cup system.

- b) **Sculling Shells** - Stern Lights: All stern lights in sculling boats must be mounted directly to the boat. Lights can be mounted directly to the stern deck using a lane marker or suction cup system or, if the shell has a stern facing wing rigger, the light can be attached to the rigger.
- c) **Sweep Shells** - Stern Lights: In a bow-coxed shell, all stern lights must be mounted directly to the stern deck using a lane marker or suction cup system or, if the shell has a stern facing wing rigger, the light can be attached to the rigger. In a stern-coxed shell, a light may be worn by the coxswain provided that it faces in the correct direction, is locked in a fixed position and is not obscured in any way whatsoever.

### **3. Mounting of the Lights - Safety Launches**

- a) **Bow Lights:** All safety launches must have a Red/Green lighting system on the bow of their boat.
- b) **Stern Lights:** All safety launches must have a solid White light on the stern of their boat.
- c) **Spotlights:** Spotlights are required in the Safety Launch for coaches to illuminate hazards, such as buoys, bridges, debris, and for signalling other on-water craft such as other boats and barges. Spotlights must be at least 1000 lumen in brightness.

## **SECTION D - DOCK LIGHTING & VISIBILITY**

- 1. All FODR/DBCC docks & or launch locations are required to have high visibility/ reflective lighting to indicate the outside edges of the docks to ensure maximum visibility for docking shells. All Hi-Visibility paint and or reflective markings will be placed on the waterside facing edge of the dock on a vertical surface to prevent slipping hazards for rowers exiting shells. Properly functioning navigation lights for use between the hours of sunset and sunrise and during periods of restricted/limited visibility, such as fog and heavy rain.
- 2. All FODR/DBCC boat & or equipment areas are required to have properly functioning lights for use between the hours of sunset and sunrise and during periods of restricted/limited visibility, such as fog and heavy rain. Lights will meet a minimum of 2 Foot Candles to aid in the prevention of trip and falls, and overhead object collisions. Recommend using solar garden lights (red preferred)

## **SECTION E - COMMUNICATIONS**

- 1. All boats are required to have functional communication systems in the event of an emergency. Cell phones in waterproof cases are required to be carried by all coaches & coxswains. All cell phones should have the following contacts numbers saved as well as our physical address: East Picnic Way & Riverbank Drive on Belle Isle.

WHO	PHONE NUMBER	ACTION
DNR	313 237 2450	Report on land emergency
COAST GUARD	313 568 9559.	Report On Water Emergency
EMERGENCY	911	ASK TO BE CONNECTED WITH BELLE ISLE RIVER RESCUE
MASTERS COACH	Tany Carson 248-330-4613	Report on Any Emergency
JUNIOR COACH(ES)	Mike Gentile 313 409-7773	Report on Any Emergency

2. **Whistles:** A whistle is **required** to be carried by all coaches, and **required** to be in every FODR boat (attached at coxswain seat or in bow seat of non-coxed boats). In low visibility and emergency situations, whistles are very effective communication systems. In situations of poor visibility, use your whistle to advise other boats of your location. **Highly recommended for Private scullers.**
3. **Megaphones:** All coaches should always have either a powered megaphone or cone megaphone in the launch. Powered megaphones often have a horn or whistle function on them as well. Make sure all megaphones have enough power to get through a given session.

## SECTION F - HIGH VISIBILITY (HI-VIS) CLOTHING

1. At least one item of high-visibility clothing or reflective material is required in all shells that launch from a FODR/DBCC location or FODR/DBCC sanctioned event. The increased visibility, even during daylight hours, is a critical safety enhancement.
  - a. All single scullers must wear Hi-Vis apparel on as a top layer, above the waist, at all times.
  - b. All other boats must have bow and stern seats wear Hi-Vis apparel on as a top layer, above the waist at all times. In a stern coxed boat the coxswain can wear hi-vis instead of stern seat.

Recommended that all seats have a Hi-Vis top layer/item above the waist.

