



MASSACHUSETTS EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

WORKPLACE SAFETY and REOPENING STANDARDS FOR FOR-HIRE AND CHARTER VESSELS – Phase III, Step 1

Amended December 9, 2020
Effective on December 13, 2020

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the authority granted to the Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) pursuant to [COVID-19 Order No. 43](#) and [COVID-19 Order No. 58](#) to issue workplace safety standards for operators of and participants in outdoor recreational activities, the following guidelines apply to For-Hire and Charter Vessels and are effective on December 13, 2020.

In Phase III, Step 1, For-Hire and Charter Vessels are permitted to operate subject to the limitations set forth below.

In accordance with the [COVID-19 Order No. 53](#), Requiring Early Closing for Certain Businesses and Activities, boating businesses must close to the public by 9:30 pm and may not re-open to the public before 5:00 am the following day (“mandatory closing period”). During this daily mandatory closing period, for-hire and charter vessels must not admit any customers, patrons, or members of the public. For-hire and charter vessels may permit employees to stay on premises during the mandatory closing period.

This document provides guidance for how to implement general workplace safety standards and other public health guidance (“COVID-19 measures”) in the context of outdoor recreational operations in Phase III of the Commonwealth’s reopening. Operators who fail to implement applicable COVID-19 measures may be sanctioned in accordance with COVID-19 Order No. 43 and [COVID-19 Order No. 58](#). Operators are further reminded that in addition to implementing COVID-19 measures in Phase III, they must still comply with all federal, state and local laws.

The public health data and guidance on which this document is based can and does change frequently. The most recent version of this document can be found on the Commonwealth’s website, <http://www.mass.gov/>

LIMITATIONS ON OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES

For-hire and charter vessels may operate in Phase III, Step 1 with specific capacity restrictions. Inspected vessels are limited to 40% capacity, plus Captain and crew, or 10 passengers, plus Captain and crew, whichever is greater, and provided further that aggregate capacity must not exceed 50 passengers plus Captain and crew. “Inspected vessels” are those subject to U.S. Coast Guard inspection under 46 USC 3301. Uninspected vessels, known as “six pack boats,” are limited to 6 passengers plus Captain and crew. Indoor areas on all vessels are limited to 40% of indoor capacity. Multiple deck vessels must limit the capacity on each deck to no more than 40% capacity. All vessels must still comply with all federal, state, and local laws.



Furthermore, all for-hire and charter vessels must ensure compliance with any other applicable industry-specific standards that applies to a relevant aspect of their facility or venue including but not limited to:

- [*Restaurant Standard*](#) for those businesses with on-site dining, concession, and other food services;
- [*Retail Standard*](#) for those businesses offering on-site retail and other similar services;
- [*Museum and Cultural and Historical Facilities and Guided Tours Standard*](#) for those businesses that offer guided tours or walking tours;
- Any other sector-specific and recommended best practices in the [*Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplace*](#).

In addition to complying with the aforementioned limitations, operators must implement the following safety measures detailed below:

I. Social Distancing

- ❖ Face coverings are required for all workers and customers in accordance with COVID-19 Order 55: [*Revised Order Requiring Face Coverings in Public Places*](#) to prevent against the transmission of COVID-19
- ❖ Passengers and crew members must abide by social distancing protocols of at least six feet between individuals. Passengers and crewmembers from the same household are not required to social distance from each other.
- ❖ Minimize the use of confined spaces (e.g., elevators, control rooms, vehicles) by more than one individual at a time; all employees in such spaces at the same time are required to wear face coverings.

II. Hygiene Protocols

- ❖ Ensure access to handwashing facilities on site, including soap and running water or provide alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol.
- ❖ Crewmembers are encouraged to provide to customers handwashing capability or sanitizer on the vessel.
- ❖ Supply employees with an adequate supply of soap, disinfectant, hand sanitizer, and paper towels.
- ❖ Crew members must provide for regular touch-point sanitization (e.g., workstations, equipment, screens, doorknobs, restrooms) no less than daily.
- ❖ Vessel captains must provide training for crewmembers regarding the COVID-19 control plan, train their crewmembers in basic hygiene practices, such as frequent and thorough hand washing, respiratory etiquette (e.g., covering coughs and sneezes), and discourage crewmembers or passengers from using others' personal property, work tools, and equipment.
- ❖ Require regular and not less than daily cleaning and sanitation of all high-touch areas such as workstations, door handles, and restrooms.
- ❖ Post visible signage throughout the site to remind employees on the hygiene and safety protocols.

III. Staffing and Operations



- ❖ Vessel captains must conduct pre-shift staff screening and maintain staff screening log.
- ❖ Vessels that offer food and beverage service must comply with all food service and [restaurant guidance](#), including that 1) bar areas must remain closed unless re-configured to accommodate table seating 2) all customers must be seated while consuming food or beverages on the vessel, and 3) all other amenities and areas not specifically designated for appropriately socially distanced, seated food and beverage consumption (e.g., decks without chairs and tables, etc.) must not be used for consumption of food or beverages. Dance floors and self-serve areas must remain closed.
- ❖ Customers and crew members should not pass or share fishing rods or equipment, to the maximum extent possible. If sharing is necessary, equipment must be disinfected between use.
- ❖ The vessel captain must establish a COVID-19 control plan addressing the practices and protocols to protect staff and the public. A control plan should be developed for each vessel.
- ❖ Signage must be posted that clearly states that any person with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 may not enter the vessel.
- ❖ Provide training to workers on up-to-date safety information and precautions including hygiene and other measures aimed at reducing disease transmission.
- ❖ Limit visitors and service providers on site; shipping and deliveries should be completed in designated areas, outside the facility if possible.
- ❖ Operators must log visitors with appropriate contact information and make that information available upon request by state officials, LBOHs or their authorized agents.
- ❖ Employees must stay home if feeling ill.
- ❖ Require workers who test positive for COVID-19 to disclose to the workplace employer for purposes of cleaning / disinfecting and contact tracing. If the employer is notified of a positive case at the workplace, the employer shall notify the local Board of Health (LBOH) in the city or town where the workplace is located and assist the LBOH as reasonably requested to advise likely contacts to isolate and self-quarantine. Testing of other workers may be recommended consistent with guidance and / or at the request of the LBOH.
- ❖ Employees who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the Centers for Disease Control (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) are encouraged to stay home.
- ❖ Post notice to employees, workers, and customers of important health information and relevant safety measures as outlined in government guidelines.
- ❖ All out-of-state visitors coming into Massachusetts must be informed of and follow the Massachusetts travel order.

IV. Cleaning and Disinfecting

- ❖ Conduct frequent cleaning and disinfection of vessels and associated boarding site.
- ❖ Keep cleaning logs that include date, time, and scope of cleaning.
- ❖ Conduct frequent disinfecting of heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., doorknobs, handrails, seating areas, bathrooms). Restrooms should be cleaned and sanitized following the [EEA COVID-19 Outdoor Recreation Facility Restroom Cleaning Best Practices](#).
- ❖ In event of a positive case, shut down site for a deep cleaning and disinfecting of the workplace in accordance with current guidance.