



# POINT OF PITTSBURGH SAILING LEAGUE

*A new Pittsburgh-based sailing program offered by area sailors*

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## **PARENT-STUDENT HANDBOOK**

# PPSL Parent - Student Handbook Contents

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# COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

The Point of Pittsburgh Sailing Program complies with standards and practices of the United States Sailing Association, American Heart Association and the national the US Center for Safe Sport.

## I. Introduction

On behalf of the Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League members, welcome to our sailing program that seeks to provide sailing opportunity for area high school students. Whether this is your first exposure to sailing or you have prior sailing experience we want to make sure that this will be a safe and enjoyable opportunity.

We have developed this handbook for you and your family to keep as a reference. We hope that we have answered all of the questions that might arise throughout the program.

In order to ensure that we maintain the highest quality program possible, we welcome and encourage your comments.

### A. Mission

The mission of the Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League is to provide an opportunity for students in Pittsburgh area high schools to experience to joy of sailing and develop sailing skills sufficient to participate in an annual regional high school sailing regatta. The program is coeducational. The learned skills will provide the foundation for a lifelong love of sailing and the opportunity to participate in many other US Sailing Association events. In addition to sailing, the program covers the proper use and care of boats, sails, and the docking area. Safety standards will be taught and strictly enforced to prevent accidents.

### B. Objective

The Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League Sailing Program is based upon the well-established curriculum of the United States Sailing Association, Inc. Students will learn the proper use and care of boats, sails, lines, and equipment.

Safety is of prime importance. Student will follow the rules and guidelines of the Point of Pittsburgh Sailing Program are intended to ensure their own safety and the safety of others.

Since there is some inherent danger associated with boating and water activities, each student must demonstrate their swimming ability by passing a basic swimming test. Students will learn to react to, recover, and regain control after an emergency such as a capsized sailboat or a crew member overboard.

Advanced students will learn basic racing skills required to start and compete in sailboat racing. Students will practice by racing each other in order to develop winning strategies.

## II. Standard Annual Sailing Off-Season Class Education & Sailing Season Schedule

Off-Season Instruction (Locations To Be Determined)	May
Dock Installation And Initiation Of On-Water Instruction	Late May
Sailing Instruction	June to October
Regional High School Sailing Regatta	Late September

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## III. General Rules

**Discipline** - Any discipline problems that pose a safety concern for other students will result in the misbehaving students being removed from class. The Student Safety Conduct Code / Discipline Policy details the expectations and procedures.

**Swearing** - No profane, disrespectful or degrading language will be tolerated at any time.

**Horseplay** - No running, chasing, tag, throwing of objects or other general horseplay activities are allowed.

**Powerboat Use** - Students will only be allowed in powerboats for appropriate sailing program activities.

- No students driving powerboats
- No full-throttle operation of powerboats except in emergency situations

In a rescue and recovery operation, the instructor will exercise their judgment of appropriate use of the boats based upon the circumstances.

## IV. Safety

Safety standards will be taught and strictly enforced to prevent accidents. Students will be expected to observe the following rules

- **Docks** - No running on, pushing, jumping, or diving off the docks.
- **Swimming** - No swimming off the docks unless instructed to do so as part of a program activity (such as the capsize exercises). No swimming under the docks or boats. No recreational swimming.
- **Personal Flotation Device (PFD) or "Lifejacket"** - Every student will be provided a U. S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device.<sup>1</sup> Their PFD must be worn at all times when they are at the waterfront, on the docks, in boats, or out on the river.
- **Signal Whistle** - Every student will have a signal whistle and attach it to his or her PFD. They will use the whistle to signal for help in an emergency.
- **Foot Protection** - Students must wear proper footwear to prevent slipping on wet surfaces such as the decks of boats and for protection from splinters. Refer to "Personal Property & Things to Bring."
- **Injury** - Report all personal injuries to an instructor immediately. All injuries are recorded in the Medical/Incident Log.
- **Powerboat Use** – PPSL powerboats are for safety, rescue and recovery use and may only be operated by authorized PPSL personnel. If students need to be transported in a powerboat they must be seated and wearing their PFD.

## V. Swim Test

In order to participate in the youth sailing program every student must be able to demonstrate his or her basic swimming ability.

- Returning students have passed a swim test in previous years and are exempted from a retest.
- Prior to commencing camp students must bring a certificate from a recognized swimming program, such as the YMCA or Red Cross, that indicates successful completion of the following test:
  - Swim (without life jacket) 125-feet using any stroke
  - Tread water for 2 minutes
  - Put on life jacket while treading water six feet deep or more

## VI. Capsize

At the beginning of every sailing season, every student will learn the basic skill of capsizing in a sailboat.<sup>2</sup> The students are instructed in a controlled environment, with guided practice, to react to their boat going over and being thrown into the water. They will learn the proper procedures to follow, not to panic, and to maintain control. This will allow them to react in a safe manner when they do capsize. They will also learn the appropriate rescue and recovery procedure so they would be able to assist other sailors if needed.

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<sup>1</sup> Refer to Start Sailing Right, Chapter 2 Safety & You, Life Jackets (PFDs), for additional information

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Start Sailing Right, Chapter 11, Capsize Recovery, and Chapter 12, Overboard Recovery for information

## **VII. Rules of the Sailing Area – The Allegheny River**

The Allegheny River is a navigable waterway with commercial and recreational powerboat traffic. As a restricted waterway, sailboats are required to keep clear of all commercial boat traffic. All on-water instruction will include an instructor in a powerboat. Instructors will have a marine radio with them at all times on the water for communication with vessels in the area and a loud-horn for communication with sailors. Lessons will include procedures and regulator practice for clearing a passing channel for commercial and recreational powerboat traffic.

### **A. Sailboat Safety Procedures & Channel Clearance for Commercial Boat Traffic**

The intent of the safety procedure is to ensure safe operation of PPSL sailboats in a river channel that includes a range of commercial and industrial boat traffic with limited ability to maneuver. It is recognized that the Allegheny River near the Point of Pittsburgh has times of significant commercial and recreational river traffic. It is clearly understood that sailing vessels are the give-way vessel in limited channels such as the Allegheny River. Given the higher level of commercial and industrial boat traffic in the Monongahela River, PPSL will limit sailing instruction to the Allegheny River Channel (down river of the area of PNC Park) to a boundary at the head of Ohio mid-channel (the Point Fountain) extending to the bow of the Requiem sailboat. The Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League intends to be the model for safe program operations that do not impinge on commercial traffic.

- The sailing program of PPSL will be a structured, instructional-based effort for high school students.
- All on-water sailing will be in led by a US Sailing Association certified instructor.
- The sailing program will follow US Sailing guidance on safe sailing including swimming certifications and wearing of PFD's and helmets at all times when on the water. US Sailing guidance includes assessing appropriate weather and water conditions for sailing. For PPSL, this will include pending weather, wind and river current.
- An AIS system and VHF radio will be on the safety boat that will be utilized for contact with commercial traffic including responding to advisories broadcasted by commercial vessels.
- A seasonal schedule for sailing instruction will be provided to the US Coast Guard Congested Waterways Committee and the Waterways Council. Periodic updates will be provided for modifications.
- At this point, sailing will not be undertaken on weekends during summer months. In addition, on-water sailing instruction will be suspended during times of high river traffic including events at PNC Park or Heinz Field.
- Instructors will have a loudhailer, whistle and air horn on board. A horn blast system to announce river channel clearing procedures to sailors will be developed and posted on all safety boats and sailboats.
- Overboard drills will be included in the clearance procedure and all sailboats will have paddles on board to aid in channel clearance.
- Channel clearance procedures will be practiced on a weekly basis.

## **B. Procedures for River Clearance Is Based on the Type of Commercial Traffic**

The sailing program coordinator will participate in the Pittsburgh Safe Boating Council and the Coast Guard Congested Waterways Committee. PPSL safety procedures will be amended based on issues raised at meetings.

### **1. General Commercial Traffic With Limited Ability To Maneuver**

Upon determining the traffic is headed in the direction of the area where sailing is underway, the lead contact will contact the commercial traffic. Sailing will be moved toward the other side of the channel. The lead will maintain contact with a commercial vessel to advise progress of moving the fleet.

### **2. Industrial Boat Traffic/Barge Traffic**

Upon determining that industrial boat traffic is headed in the direction of the area with active sailing, the safety boat will contact the vessel. Sailing will be moved toward the closest shore area and clear of the marked channel. The safety will maintain contact with the vessel to advise progress of moving the fleet.

## **VIII. Personal Property & Things To Bring**

**Label Items** - Please label all personal property that you bring to PPSL with your name!

**Food** - Students should bring any food in a sealed plastic bag a kept with them at all times and bottled water.

**Personal Flotation, Shoes, Towel, Clothes, Etc.** - Each student must bring the following items with them each day:

- Footwear, Non-skid shoes are necessary for traction on wet or slanted decks. They should cover toes and heel to prevent splinters from the dock. Water shoes or boat shoes work best, (\$15 - \$30); their soles are designed for wet traction and the shoe dries quickly. Flip-flops get lost in the water and do not provide any protection. See Safety on page 6.
- Optional Sailing Gloves (\$15-\$30) - Special gloves with no fingertips to help grip the wet lines in heavy air.
- Backpack or Bag - to neatly carry and store all of your gear
- Hat - with visor (baseball cap) to shield your eyes and keep the sun off your head
- Sunscreen - (SPF-30 or higher) to protect skin, even on cloudy days. Reapply frequently.
- Swimsuit, Towel
- Change of clothes - Wear loose clothing. Bring extra clothing in a bag or backpack so you can add layers for warmth or change into dry clothing if you get wet. On warm days, wear light, breathable clothing, preferably in lighter colors (they are cooler). Pack a waterproof (plastic supermarket) bag to carry your wet clothing, swimsuit, or towel home.
- Sunglasses - Wear sunglasses with good UV (at least 90%) protection. Polarized models are great for reducing glare off the water. Wear a cord (croakie) around your neck to keep them from falling overboard (some styles provide flotation to keep your sunglasses afloat).
- Water bottle - You need to keep hydrated in warm weather.

**Medications** - We have no provisions for dispensing medication. Parents/guardians will need to make the necessary arrangements for medications. Students who are deemed competent by their parents may carry asthma and allergy treatments. Parents must sign the permission form.

**Cell Phone** - If your parents have you carry a cell phone for emergency contact, please keep it safely stored, turned off, or in silent mode. Remember that we are not responsible for lost or stolen articles.

**DO NOT BRING:** Valuables, electronic equipment, toys, games, tools, pocketknives, or weapons of any kind – PPSL is not responsible for lost items.



## IX. United States Sailing Association, Inc.

The United States Sailing Association, Inc. also referred to as "US SAILING" is the Official National Governing Body of Sailing in the United States. It represents sailors in Olympic, government, and international organizations. US SAILING offers an extensive range of services and products to sailors. Please visit the US SAILING Website [www.ussailing.org](http://www.ussailing.org) to learn more information on training, books, events, etc.

## X. Program Curriculum

The Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League follows the "Small Boat" curriculum of the United States Sailing Association, Inc (US SAILING). We use instructors who have earned at least Level I (Sailing) instructor certification. All training material and publications used are developed and or distributed by US SAILING.

Students will work towards US SAILING **"Small Boat Sailor" Certification**. This includes learning and then demonstrating mastery of skills in the following areas:

Wind Direction	Rigging / Unrigging	Knots And Lines
Rules Of The Road	Departure / Landing	Steering
Safety Position	Tacking	Points Of Sail
Jibing	Capsize Recovery	Overboard Recovery
Getting Out Of Irons	Upwind Sailing	

Once certified as a "Small Boat Sailor," advanced students may work towards US SAILING **"Small Boat Performance Sailor" Certification**. This includes learning and then demonstrating mastery of skills in the following areas:

Seamanship	Nomenclature	Navigation
Current	Weather And Land Effects	Proper Sail Trim
Proper Boat Trim	Roll Tacking	Jibing
Sailing A Windward Leg	Sailing A Reach	Starting
Finishing	Rounding Marks	Sailing Without A Rudder
Sailing Backwards	Spinnaker Skills And Trim	

Each student will receive a **Small Boat Sailor Certification Record Book** to track their progress towards their US SAILING Small Boat Sailor Certification.

## **XI. Medical and Health Policy**

The safety of all Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League participants and instructors is of utmost importance to our program's success.

### **A. Medications**

PPSL is not generally authorized to dispense any medications. Students who are deemed competent by their parents or guardians may carry their own allergy and asthma implements such as inhalers and Epi-pens. Epi-pens or similar allergy devices which may be administered by appropriately trained staff in emergencies. PPSL will require a written authorization from the parent or guardian to do so.

Inhalers and Epi-pens must be sealed in waterproof bags and attached to the student's PFD in such a manner as to eliminate the possibility of the waterproof bag becoming entangled with sailing equipment.

### **B. River Water**

There can be high levels of algae or bacteria in river water. It is reasonable to be conservative and limit student and staff exposure to the water. These procedures are necessary for protection of students in the program.

- The PPSL will accept a certificate from a recognized swimming program that students are competent swimmers. Such programs include, but are not limited to, the Red Cross or YMCA.
- Students and staff should not swallow river water.
- All students and staff coming into contact with river water should rinse off with clean water.
- Life jackets should be left outside and hosed off as needed.

## **XII. Student Safety Conduct Code / Discipline Policy**

Safety of students and staff at the PPSL Sailing Program is our primary concern. Cooperation and respect are essential to safety and are expected from all students in the sailing program. The program staff or director may remove a student from class if that student's behavior creates a disruptive or dangerous situation for him/herself, other students, or program staff. We request that all parents support our efforts by reviewing this policy with their children.

Students must return a signed copy of this policy before they can participate in the program.

### **A. First Incident**

- Student will be removed from class and will be kept on-shore for a period of time deemed appropriate by the director or assistant director. Student will be supervised by a staff member.
- The incident will be recorded in the Medical/Incident Book.
- Parent/guardian will be informed of the incident by the program director or designee at the end of the day. The parent/guardian will receive a copy of what is recorded in the Medical/Incident Book

### **B. Second Incident**

- Student will be removed from class and parent/guardian will be called to take the student home. The student will be supervised by a staff member until the parent/guardian arrives.
- The incident will be recorded in the Medical/Incident Book. The parent/guardian will receive a copy of what is recorded in the Medical/Incident Book.
- The student will only be allowed to return to the program after a discussion with the program director, the student, and the parent/guardian.

### **C. Third Incident**

- Student will be removed from class. Parent/guardian will be called to take student home. The student will be supervised by a staff member until the parent/guardian arrives.
- The incident will be recorded in the Medical/Incident Book. The parent/guardian will receive a copy of what is recorded in the Medical/Incident Book.
- The student will not be allowed to return to the program. There will be no refund of program tuition.
- Student will not be allowed to register for the program the following year.

### **XIII. Student Agreement & Receipt**

PPSL requests that each student read this handbook and review it with his or her parent or guardian. If you require clarification of any material, please feel free to contact a point of Pittsburgh Sailing League Sailing Staff Member. The Student Receipt in the registration packet must be returned before starting class.

Please complete, sign and return this form to the **Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League**  
PO Box 24526 Pittsburgh PA 15228 during orientation or at the beginning of your session:

**We acknowledge that we have received a copy of the Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League Student-Parent Handbook. We also acknowledge that we have read the handbook.**

- We understand that students are expected to arrive for sailing instruction when scheduled.
- We agree to abide by the Point of Pittsburgh Sailing League Student Safety Conduct Code / Discipline Policy.
- We also understand that each student wears his /her Personal Flotation Device (approved Life Jacket) each day.

Student

Parent or Guardian

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student 2  
(of same Parent or Guardian)

Parent or Guardian

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student 3  
(of same Parent or Guardian)

Parent or Guardian

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Print: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_