



Rower Acknowledgement of Safe Practices

Intention: In order to maintain a safe rowing environment and to meet the safety guidelines of Jackson-Reed Crew, all athletes must read and understand the Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Guide, view the USRowing Safety Video and complete online SafeSport Training. For more details see www.jacksonreedcrew.org/safety

Acknowledgement of Safe Practices

I, the athlete, have read, understand, and agree to comply with the [Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Guide](#). I understand that safety is the top priority of Jackson-Reed Crew.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I have viewed and understand the *USRowing Safety Video*.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I have obtained my USRowing Membership *and* taken the required SafeSport Training.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____



SAFETY GUIDE

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1. Introduction

For Jackson-Reed Crew, safety is the number one concern of all coaches, student athletes, parents and others associated with the program. Every member of the team, and supporters of the program play an important role in ensuring the safe conduct of the rowing program at Jackson-Reed High School. The *Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Guide* is meant to provide a framework for both coaches and athletes to follow while they are part of the Jackson-Reed Crew team. This includes activities both on and off the water, as well as any racing venue that the team participates at. All, including parents/guardians, are expected to read and thoroughly understand, and abide by the *Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Guide*. This safety guide is only as good as those who follow up. So familiarize yourself with the material in this guide. The rules in this guide are here for your protection, and the protection of those around you. Take them seriously. There will be no exceptions. Please read through the entire guide and ask any of the coaches if you have any questions.

Every athlete is responsible for their own safety.

As the primary role of the coaches is to ensure the safety of all participating athletes, it is vital that all athletes listen to instructions from the coaches, both on and off the water.

2. Safety Expectations, Responsibilities and Training

Rowing is a safe sport when everyone involved in our program understands the risks associated with the sport and understands how to conduct themselves and others in a safe manner. Like all sports, there is a risk of minor accidents. As with any water sport there is a

risk of personal injury from collisions, and the risk of drowning when athletes fall into the water. Many accidents take place because participants make uninformed decisions. Many conditions and factors can affect the ability to have a safe practice or race, such as: weather, water conditions, time of day, equipment, and supervision. Coaches and athletes must be aware of these conditions to guarantee team safety.

2.1 Coaches

- A. The coach/coaches are in charge of the athletes during all training sessions and racing events. The head coach has the highest authority.
- B. All Jackson-Reed Crew coaches must meet the following minimum safety qualifications:
 - CPR/First-Aid/AED Certification (up-to-date)
 - DC Harbor Patrol approved boating safety course certification
 - Detailed understanding of the *Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Guide*

2.2 Athletes

- A. All athletes are responsible for their own safe behavior and for the safety of each boat they are operating. Athletes shall report any damage or problems with the equipment on the boat immediately to the coach in charge.
- B. Before participating in any event related to Jackson-Reed Crew, all athletes must complete the online registration process and submit all required forms to the Jackson-Reed Crew Boosters.
- C. All Novice athletes must complete a swimming test of treading water for five (5) minutes and swimming 100 yards. Failure to pass the swim test will require a rower to wear a PFD before participating in any team practices. The PFD requirement for an athlete can be lifted if the athlete passes the swim test at a later point in time. Varsity athletes may be asked to take a swim test at any point, at the discretion of the coaching staff.
- D. All athletes are expected to have proper clothing for varying weather conditions:
 - Cold/Rain: long sleeves, non-cotton layers, long/thermal tights, hat
 - Heat/Sunny: light-colored clothing, sunglasses, hat, and sunscreen
- E. Rowers may get sick and/or injured during the year and are expected to communicate directly with their coaches on their ability to participate in a practice or race. If parents have concerns about the severity of an illness or injury, they may of course confer with coaches.
- F. All athletes are expected to have reviewed the *Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Guide* in addition to viewing the [USRowing Safety Video](#).
- G. All athletes must complete SafeSport Training via their USRowing Membership. For details visit www.jacksonreedcrew.org/safety

2.3 Pre-Season Requirements

At the start of spring and fall rowing seasons, the following shall take place before crews go on the water:

- A. Coaches shall review the *Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Guide* and the *Safety Rules & Guidelines for the Potomac River* published by the Potomac River Safety Committee.
- B. Coaches shall conduct a safety orientation meeting for all athletes. The orientation shall review all safety rules and procedures both on land, and on water. A review of the Potomac River traffic pattern and hazards will be covered as described in the *Safety Rules & Guidelines for the Potomac River* published by the Potomac River Safety Committee.
- C. Coaches shall conduct a pre-season orientation briefing with all coxswains. This orientation will be an addition to the safety meeting conducted with all athletes and will highlight the special role that coxswains have in ensuring team safety.
- D. Novice athletes shall receive specific instruction on the proper transport and storage of equipment at Thompson Boat Center.
- E. A record of each athlete shall be placed in the Jackson-Reed Crew cubbies, including the athlete's name and date of birth; address; name and phone number of an

emergency contact; list of allergies and other important medical information; and name of medical insurance provider. The coaching staff may decide to store this information electronically, as long as all coaches have access to the data while at Thompson Boat Center and away regattas.

F. All launch safety kits shall be checked and re-stocked as necessary.

3. Practice Preparation

3.1 Equipment

Athletes will check to make sure that all equipment is properly functioning before launching for practice or a race. This may include:

- All bolts are present and tight
- Seats and slides
- Shoes and Heel ties
- Spacers
- Bow ball
- Rudder is attached and straight
- Steering cables work
- Bow and stern lights (when necessary; coaches check to make sure all lights are visible.)
- Bow and stern compartments are dry and port lids are screwed on with a watertight seal.

If equipment is not functioning properly, or equipment is missing or broken, the coach in charge needs to be notified. If missing or malfunctioning equipment is used, then further damage can occur.

3.2 Clothing

All athletes should be prepared for any and all-weather conditions. Check the weather before each day's practice. All athletes should wear fitted clothing such as spandex or rowing specific unisuits/trousers to avoid getting clothing caught in the slides/seat. **DO NOT WEAR COTTON CLOTHING ON THE WATER.** In colder weather cotton clothing retains the moisture and mixed with the colder air increases the risk of hypothermia.

3.3 Hydration

Every athlete should carry their own reusable water bottle to stay hydrated during practices and races. Athletes should consume water before, during and after practice to remain hydrated. If you wait until you're thirsty to take a drink, you're already slightly dehydrated.

3.4 Warm-Ups

Warm-ups shall be completed on land prior to all training sessions. Warm-ups are intended to loosen up the bodies, gradually raise the heart rate, and increase blood flow in order to prevent injuries from occurring during the training session. Each coach will outline the specific warm-up expected for each squad.

3.5 Traffic Patterns

All athletes (both rowers and coxswains) are expected to know and understand the traffic patterns for the Potomac River as outlined in [Appendix 2: Potomac River Safety Rules and Maps](#). Coxswains will join coaches for “coaches and coxswains meetings” at races and are expected to know and understand the traffic patterns for that course and or event.

4. General Safety

4.1 General Water Safety

- A. Jackson-Reed Crew shall adopt the Safety Rules contained in the [Safety Rules & Guidelines for the Potomac River](#) by the Potomac River Safety Committee. The *Safety Rules* address the Potomac River traffic patterns and hazards, rowing before sunrise or after sunset, cold weather/winter rowing, inclement weather, launches and coaches, and other on the water guidelines.
- B. Prior to allowing crews to launch, coaches will consult weather predictions and observe actual conditions to anticipate high winds, high water, cold, dangerously rough water, or other potentially dangerous conditions and make an informed decision about whether to practice on the water.
- C. When multiple squads are practicing, coaches will communicate their practice plans with each other before launching for every practice.
- D. Whenever conditions are in doubt, a coaches’ meeting will be held near the Jackson-Reed cubbies in the furthest downstream bay.
- E. Follow coaches’ and coxswains’ instructions at all times.

4.2 Dock Safety

- A. No running or horseplay is allowed.
- B. No swimming. If something falls in the water and you cannot grab it from the dock, then consider it lost.
- C. The dock will be slippery when wet. Walk carefully.
- D. Carry oars with the blades in front of you. Stack oars out of the way on the dock in an organized manner. When carrying a boat, watch out for oars, shoes and other objects on the dock.
- E. Do not step through a rigger when getting into or out of a boat.
- F. Follow coaches’ and coxswains’ instructions at all times.

4.3 Launch Safety

- A. Coaches should set up launches each day with life jackets, megaphones, safety kit boxes, and gas.
- B. All persons in a launch shall wear an approved PFD.
- C. In general, the launch should be reserved for persons who are actively engaging in coaching or safety supervision. Launches should not be used for spectators.
- D. A coach in a launch/safety boat should remain within 250 meters of all crews under

his/her supervision.

- E. A coach in a launch shall wear the outboard motor kill-switch lanyard at all times when the motor is in operation.
- F. Safety kits shall be available in each launch, and shall include the following:
 - First Aid kit
 - 20 space blankets
 - 1 tow line 50 feet in length
 - Enough PFDs for all athletes under supervision
 - Other equipment as needed

4.4 Regatta Safety

- A. For away races and races on the Potomac River where Jackson-Reed Crew is not the host team, all crews shall follow the Safety Plan of the host organization.
- B. If Jackson-Reed Crew is the host team, the following rules will apply, in addition to the rest of the *Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Guide*:
 - The referees shall be the primary respondents to on the water emergencies for the entire length of the racecourse and respond accordingly.
 - If people are in the water, launch boat drivers shall not drive the boat into the immediate area until the referee indicates that it is safe to do so and until all are accounted for.
 - The referees and/or coaches shall stop the competition at the first sound of thunder or view of flash of lightning. All launching is suspended in this situation.
 - The referees and coaches shall make a joint decision as to when to return to the river and to resume the racing. In no case shall racing commence before a thirty (30) minute waiting period.
 - Other weather conditions, including wind speed, river flow, water temperature, air temperature, and visibility will be continuously monitored during the regatta to ensure participant safety.

When necessary, additional safety plans will be developed for the specific regatta.

5. Emergencies

5.1 Reporting

- A. In the event of a health or safety emergency, a coach shall assess the seriousness of the situation and use his or her judgment, which may include notifying/calling:
 - Harbor Patrol/US Coast Guard
 - Other coaches
 - 911 (Call 911 if practice is as school)
 - Jackson-Reed High School Athletic Director
 - President of Jackson-Reed Crew Boosters
- B. The head coach should be informed immediately of all issues or incidents that take place.

- C. Jackson-Reed Crew will follow the above notification procedure with the coaches being the primary respondents to emergencies at practices.
- D. Assistant coaches will immediately report incidents to the head coach. All coaches will immediately report the following river incidents:
 - Any run-in or dangerous situation involving another crew
 - Any run-in or dangerous situation involving commercial boating traffic
 - Any athlete in the water for any reason

- E. All medical emergencies or other serious incidents shall be documented in the *Jackson-Reed Crew Incident Report* to the Jackson-Reed High School Athletic Director and Jackson-Reed Senior High School Crew Boosters, prepared by the coach(es) involved (found in [Appendix 3](#)).
 - Any accident that damages equipment
 - Any accident involving another crew
 - Any rower incapacitated during a practice for any reason
 - Other serious issues as selected by the supervising coach

5.2 Capsize and Person Overboard Procedures

- A. In the event of a capsized boat or person overboard, all athletes will follow procedures as outlined in [Appendix 3](#).
- B. If a rower falls out of a boat, or “catches a crab” and is thrown from the boat, the crew should stop rowing and hold water immediately so they can lend assistance. Do not go in the water to try to help the ejected rower. The crew should get the attention of the coach's launch while the rower treads water. In the event that a launch is not nearby, the crew can back up to the ejected rower so the rower can use the shell as a floatation device. It is also feasible to pass an oar to the ejected rower, using the oar as a floatation device. Once removed from the water, the rower shall be evaluated to determine if the rower is fit to continue or if a medical emergency exists.

5.3 Heat/Cold Emergencies

- A. Special precautions need to be taken when rowing in cold weather. Rowers need to be dressed properly (i.e. dressed in multiple non cotton layers, long sleeves, long trou, hat, thick socks, etc.), coxswains need to take extra precautions, and coaches need to carefully consider the decision to row, as well as the plans on the water.
- B. There are a number of factors that influence cold weather safety. These include air temperature, water temperature, wind speed and direction, time of day, river flow rate, and wave/chop conditions.
- C. Coaches should carefully consider the decision to go out when air or water temperatures are less than 45 degrees. Rowing is discouraged when the air or water temperature is less than 35 degrees. Rowing is prohibited when the air or water temperature is less than 29 degrees. When coaches are going out in cold conditions, they should consider:
 - Increasing the number of safety launches
 - Decreasing the number of rowing shells
 - Taking out 8+s only

- Only taking out top boats
 - Changing practice plans
 - Restricting novice participation
- D. Coaches should always err on the side of caution when making decisions regarding cold weather.

Please see [Appendix 2](#) for more on *Weather Related Health Emergencies*

6. Parent/Guardian Information

- A. Parents/guardians shall review the safety rules and procedures for both on land and on the water as detailed in the *Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Plan*.
- B. All volunteer launch boat drivers must attend a hands-on launch boat driver orientation and successfully complete an on-line boating safety course.

7. Acknowledgements

Jackson-Reed Crew would like to thank the [Potomac River Safety Committee](#) for permission to use material from *Safety Rules & Guidelines for the Potomac River* for the Jackson-Reed Crew Safety Plan.

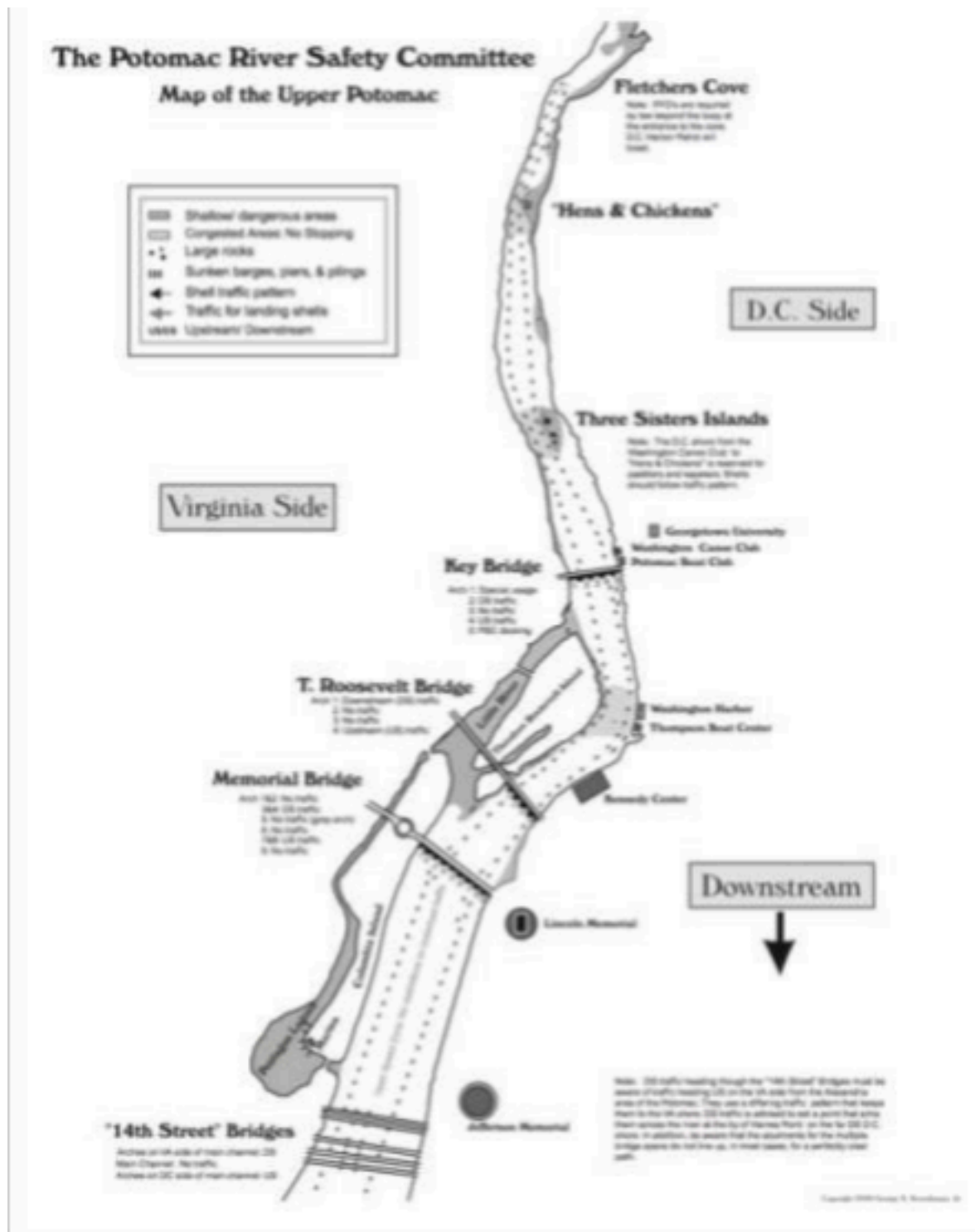
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Appendix 1: Map of the Upper Potomac



Appendix 2: Potomac River Safety Commission Guidelines.

The Potomac River Safety Commission Guidelines are available here:

<https://potomacriversafetycommittee.org/safety-guidelines/>

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Appendix 3: Jackson-Reed Crew - Incident Report Form

The form is available on the Jackson-Reed Crew webpage www.jacksonreedcrew.org/safety