

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

DRYA Recommendations Provided from US Sailing

Most community sailing centers, yacht clubs and sailing schools have their own on-water Emergency Action Plan (EAP) unique to their own venue, facility, sailing area and environment.

A carefully drafted and vetted EAP is a valuable resource for accident protocol. You will be required to present your standard of care in the case of an accident that leads to litigation. Your plan, **at a minimum**, should include:

- How you will manage an accident on and off the water.
- How you will communicate to emergency services from the water and off the water.
- Having the necessary lifesaving equipment both on and off the water.
- Identifying where you will keep medical forms, so they can be immediately accessed in the event of an emergency.
- There should be no risk that a mast hit a powerline.

Emergency Action Plans for Sailing Organizations:

Six Tips to Optimize your Plan and Response
By Whitney Peterson, Gowrie Group

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

At the most basic level, an Emergency Action Plan covers these important things:

- The key steps to take if an emergency or life threatening injury occurs.
- What to tell 9-1-1 or emergency responders when reporting the situation.
- The exact locations for where to meet the emergency responders.
- The key contact information needed for communication during and after an incident.

Six Tips to Optimize your Emergency Plan and Response.

As you create and practice your EAP, Gowrie Group recommends you also review these 6 tips to empower your team to respond to an emergency as quickly, safely, and effectively as possible.

1. Review and Practice your Emergency Action Plan Annually

- Review your EAP with all staff at least once a year.
- Run a practice “drill” each season – invite your local emergency authorities to participate.
- Team with local emergency authorities (Coast Guard, fire department, police, harbor master, etc.) when developing and practicing your EAP. Together, determine the optimal rendezvous locations for emergency transfers, document how to contact each authority, and understand how jurisdictions change from water to land.
- When necessary, revise your plan based on learnings from your practice “drill.”

2. Post and Share your Emergency Action Plan Prominently

- A summary version of your EAP should be posted prominently in multiple locations at your facility: near phones/VHF, dock office, front office, etc.
- Laminated versions of your summary EAP should be given to all on-the-water staff and attached to each coach boat, launch, club vessel, and/or RC boat.
- It may also be appropriate to share a copy with your club members and/or to post to your website.

3. Employ Effective VHF Communication

- Know what VHF station your club/program uses, and what station the local emergency teams use.
- Ensure employees do a radio check before taking a VHF radio into service/action, every time.
- Determine a strategy for having 2 VHF's and 2 people with the injured person/incident at all times.
- When speaking, clearly state your name and which boat you are in (every radio transmission).
- Use HIGH power setting on the VHF for maximum volume and reach in an emergency.
- Ensure shore team receiving injured person has a working VHF tuned to the right channel (borrow from another uninvolved staff member if needed).
- Use cell phones when and where appropriate and effective.

4. Know how to Communicate your Location

- When practicing/reviewing your plan, make sure the team knows the number/names of the closest government buoys, landmarks, and channel markers.
- When reporting your location, use North/South/West/East to indicate direction (not Left/Right).

- When possible, report your location using Latitude/Longitude, in addition to visual landmarks and nautical markers.
- Know how to drop a waypoint at the scene of the accident – this can be critical in the case of missing lives or assets.

5. Prevent Additional Accidents and Incidents

- Train your team to stay calm, focused, and alert; and to act as quickly as they safely can.
- Do not put yourself or others in harm's way when responding or attending to an incident.
- Respond and assist the injured person(s) to the best of your abilities – without risking additional injury to yourself or others.
- If Junior Sailing related, remember to ensure the safe return to shore of the other children in the class.
- When possible, secure the other boats involved and around the incident.
- When possible, reduce or eliminate non-emergency (discretionary) recreational boating in the area.

6. Be Smart about Communication and Information Sharing

- Ensure all onsite staff knows an emergency situation is occurring (dock, launch, instructors, galley, office)
 - Have Office personnel or periphery person notify Flag Officers or General Manager as soon as possible.
 - Follow US Sailing's 10 Crisis Steps: Act as quickly, responsible, humanely and openly as you can.
- Form a small management committee but speak with one voice.
Immediately contact all people with a connection by telephone. Call for independent review. Send no emails unless absolute security is guaranteed. Inform your insurance agent and listen to what they say. Listen to your lawyer, but do not

sound like one. Respect the public's need to know, while also respecting victims' privacy. Be accurate; say nothing unless you know it to be true. Take ritual seriously honor rescuers; consult clergy, psychologists and other specialists. Respect PTSD. Grief counseling is extremely valuable

Emergency Card Template

This Emergency Card should be reviewed, updated, and practiced annually.

Name of Org: Emergency Card
Address, phone number(s), Lat/Long

Emergency or Life-Threatening Injury – Steps

1. Render assistance
 2. Make contact with coaches or program staff for assistance
 3. Call for Help & Emergency Medical Attention: (Who to call and order should be customized for location.)
 - 9-1-1
 - Harbor Master: VHF#16, xxx-xxx-xxxx
 - Local US Coast Guard: VHF#16, xxx-xxx-xxxx
 - Main Office: VHF #, xxx-xxx-xxxx
 4. Monitor and administer first-aid (List AED locations, boats with AED, etc.)
 5. Send someone to meet/direct Emergency vehicles
 6. Transfer injured to care of Emergency Team
 7. Debrief and inform key people: Commodore, GM, Sailing Director, family of injured
 8. Complete an incident report
- Be prepared to tell 9-1-1:
- Current location of injured person

- Description of boats (if requesting on-water help)
- Where you plan to bring injured person ashore (see below)
- Age/gender/number of injured people
- Type of injury/situation
- Your name and call back number

Emergency Response Pick-Up Locations:

Name	Description	Address	Cross Street	Lat/Long
A Location	Name 1 Describe...	# Street, Town, State	Street	
B Location	Name 2 Describe...	# Street, Town, State	Street	
C Location	Name 3 Describe...	# Street, Town, State	Street	

Emergency Numbers Organization's Numbers

911 Main Number: xxx-xxx-xxxx, VHF#
 Harbor Master: VHF#16, xxx-xxx-xxxx
 Launch: xxx-xxx-xxxx, VHF#
 Harbor Police: VHF#16, xxx-xxx-xxxx
 General Manager: xxx-xxx-xxxx
 Local Coast Guard: VHF#16, xxx-xxx-xxxx
 Commodore/President: xxx-xxx-xxxx
 Local Fire: xxx-xxx-xxxx Sailing Director: xxx-xxx-xxxx
 Date of most recent revision: _____

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