

The Honorable Jay Inslee  
Governor of the State of Washington

Dear Governor Inslee,

The rowing community is working to safely navigate a path towards normalcy while our state responds to the SARS-CoV-19 outbreak. We recognize that public safety is our collective priority and we have made changes to our operations to match the four phases for reopening the state's economy without clarity as to how our sport is defined within those guidelines. Our boathouses ceased operations for most of March and early April, and many had to lay off coaches and staff, freezing programs that serve a wide range of athletes from middle school to adult rowers. Some boathouses with the capital infrastructure to resume limited service with single scull rowing shells are currently operating under phase 2 guidelines for outdoor fitness, without any clear indication that they are in compliance. Many boathouses and teams do not have this equipment and remain unable to serve their communities. These boathouses rely on team boats to serve the greatest number of athletes, and are currently not allowed to offer access to their members. We would like to ask for clarification on the state's guidelines for paddle sports, as it relates to mixed household boats. We request that mixed household rowing shells be included in the allowable activities along with the easing of outdoor recreation restrictions in phase 2, following a progression we have outlined in the attached proposal for a return to team rowing.

Our sport provides healthy opportunities for local families and households to get on the water, and offer a structured, safe way for Washington youth to experience the storied history of our sport. Washington State is home to many boathouses and thousands of rowers, past and present. Our state's rowing history includes the inspirational story of Joe Rantz, featured in the "The Boys in the Boat," currently being made into a movie directed by George Clooney. Rowing, like many sports, creates community. Team boats in particular, are the preferred rowing shells for parks and recreation teams working in underserved communities, and for the boathouses involved with the most number of youth.

As outdoor sport providers, we appreciate risk management. We have been operating with strict hygiene protocols to be able to provide a safe environment for our staff and members. We are in a position now, after several weeks of operation with limited access to only those with single scull rowing shells, to ease restrictions following the phase 2 guidelines for paddle sports. The United States Rowing Association, our sport's governing body, has provided a clear metric for use in determining when to return to team boat use. They recommend that training in team boats resume when the local infection rate is less than 50 new cases per 100,000 people in total for the last seven-day period, and to determine this rate by county. In King County, the 7 day infection rate as of June 12, 2020 is 9.18, well under this metric. This metric is based on WHO recommendations and is being used by the World Rowing Federation as well.

During Phase Two, we would like to request consideration for the precedent set by the paddle sports outfitters to offer our programming to more than one household in our boats. Given that we operate outdoors, in rowing shells where because of the nature of the sport we are rowing backwards, away from expelled breath, we believe that we can offer a safe return to the water for the rowers left out, who do not have access to single scull rowing shells. United States Rowing believes that with the proper protocols in place (see attachment), team boat rowing can resume once localities reach the recommended case limit. Again, this resumption of team boats rests on the assumption of strict hygiene protocols and conservative programming to ensure that our athletes and their communities are not compromised.

We are confident that our boathouses can provide a safe and healthy environment for their staff and athletes. We can help families who rely on our programming for their youth, and who have been working hard to keep Washington safe during this crisis. Please find enclosed our statement and we thank you for your continued leadership during these trying times.

Respectfully yours,

Name/Boathouse/County

## Statement from the Rowing Boathouses of Washington State

We will continue to be part of the solution. Washington boathouses offer a safe and healthy outlet for athletes who recreate outside. The fresh air, open space and exercise offer emotional health benefits. Despite being outdoors, the extra hygiene protocols that we have put in place in response to the SARS-CoV19 crisis to further increase the safety of participants and staff must remain in place. As risk management professionals, our boat houses are well prepared to undertake the responsibility of safely guiding our operations into the next phases of opening, to include offering programming to mixed household rowing shells.

### Hygiene protocols

1. Masks should always be worn in and around the boathouse, on the apron and on the docks.
2. Masks can be removed once on the water but should be put back on when returning to the dock.
3. All individuals must self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 daily. Each person should take their temperature daily prior to arrival at the boathouse. If their temperature is 100.4 degrees or over, the person should not come to the boathouse.
4. All athletes, coaches and staff should sanitize or wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds upon arrival and should follow hand-washing protocols regularly.
5. Communal spaces should be closed when possible (locker rooms, drinking fountains, etc.) Pay attention to commonly touched items in your area of training or boathouse such as doorknobs, hoses, water spigots, etc. These should be disinfected regularly if they are not closed.
6. Athletes should carry small containers of hand sanitizer to use after touching potentially contaminated surfaces if no soap or water is available.
7. No personal items should be stored at the boathouse. All personal items must remain in the individuals' vehicle or be brought in the boat with them.
8. Utilize a reservation system and online logbook in order to manage the number of individuals onsite at one time.
9. Any individual known to have been exposed to a person who has been sick and/or diagnosed with COVID-19 must self-report to a designated person at the club if the rower was physically present at the boathouse within the prior 14 days, and the individual must self-quarantine for 14 days before returning.
10. If training in groups, train in the same group and do not mix training groups in order to decrease the risk of exposure across groups.
11. Organizations must follow state and local guidelines pertaining to parks and public waterways in the operation of on-the-water training.
12. Shared equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.
13. If possible, one dock/set of docks should be used for launching and a second dock/set of docks should be used for recovery.

### Suggested Return to Team Rowing Plan

1. Mixed household sweep boats permitted in designated practice time only.
2. Sign ups must be done 48 hour prior. No added personnel after that time.
3. Lineups must remain the same for a 2 week period, during which boathouse must track any health changes
4. All participants must read & comply with safe return to rowing procedures before resuming rowing with the team
5. All participants must sign the contract & waiver before resuming rowing with the team
6. All participants must wear a mask while on the dock.
7. All operations will move back a phase, or pause if needed at any time due to safety concerns, reevaluation of protocols or changes in local regulations.

### Step One

- team 2- and 2x
- set lineups only for this time period. No substitutions are allowed. Sign up only for the time period when both can row.
- if after 2 weeks, no transmission has occurred, move to Step Two

### Step Two

- team 4x and 4-
- set lineups only for this time period. No substitutions are allowed. Sign up only for the time period when all 4 can row.
- if after 2 weeks, no transmission has occurred, move to Step Two Modified

### Step Two Modified

- team 4x and 4-
- mixed lineups within the current team roster for this time period.
- if after 2 weeks, no transmission has occurred, move to Step Three

### Step Three

- team 8s
- coxswain wearing a clear face shield
- set lineups only. No substitutions are allowed. Sign up only for the time period when all 8 can row.
- if after 2 weeks, no transmission has occurred, move to Step Three Modified

### Step Three Modified

- team 8s
- coxswain wearing a clear face shield
- mixed lineups within the current team roster for this time period.
- if after 2 weeks, no transmission has occurred, move to Step Four

### Step Four

- team 8s
- regular team practices resume

## **USRowing Re-opening the Boathouse/Return to Training Considerations Post-COVID-19**

### **Team Boats**

As physical/social distancing guidelines begin to be relaxed, group size numbers are increased and close contact sports (i.e. basketball, football, etc.) are permitted in your area, USRowing recommends organizations use the following standards published by FISA, based on WHO recommendations, in order to resume rowing in team boats.

- o Training in team boats may resume when the local infection rate is less than 50 new cases per 100,000 people in total for the last seven-day period. USRowing recommends that organizations determine their rate by county. The best way to calculate this number is to divide the total number of cases in the last seven days by your county's population and then multiply by 100k. Please check your state or local health authority's COVID-19 webpage for the most relevant data. • Ex. Philadelphia, Pa. (as of 6/10/2020): 692 (total new cases from 6/4- 10) / 1,584,000 (population of Philadelphia) x 100,000 = 43.68 new cases/100k.
- o If your county's infection rate is near the recommended case limit and in an upward trend, USRowing encourages organizations to proceed with caution before moving to rowing in team boats in order to prevent having to shut down again.
- o USRowing recommends rowing in the same training groups each day to limit cross-group exposure.

### **Additional General Guidelines**

- Masks should always be worn in and around the boathouse, on the apron and on the docks. Masks can be removed once on the water in a single but should be put back on when returning to the dock. Masks should be worn in addition to physical/social distancing.
- Athlete, coach and staff health must be monitored at least daily. Please see "Return to Training/Athlete Health Monitoring" section for details.
- All athletes, coaches and staff should sanitize or wash their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds upon arrival and should follow hand-washing protocols regularly.
- Communal spaces should be closed when possible (locker rooms, drinking fountains, etc.) Pay attention to commonly touched items in your area of training or boathouse such as doorknobs, hoses, water spigots, etc. These should be disinfected regularly if they are not closed. Athletes should carry small containers of hand sanitizer to use after touching potentially contaminated surfaces if no soap or water is available.
- USRowing recommends that personal items remain in the individuals' vehicle or be brought in the boat with them, not stored in the boathouse. If storage of personal items is allowed, storage units must be wiped down with disinfectant before and after every use.
- USRowing recommends setting up a reservation system and online logbook in order to manage the number of individuals onsite at one time.

### **Return to Training/Athlete Health Monitoring**

- Any individual (athletes, coaches, and staff) returning to the boathouse or to a training environment should have been in that general geographic location for 14 days prior to coming to the boathouse.
- Any individual known to have been exposed to a person who has been sick and/or diagnosed with COVID-19 must self-report to a designated person at the club if the rower was physically present at the boathouse within the prior 14 days, and the individual must self-quarantine for 14 days before returning.
- All individuals should self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 daily. Each person should take their temperature daily prior to arrival at the boathouse. If their temperature is 100.4 degrees or over, the person should not come to the boathouse.
- USRowing recommends that athletes, coaches and staff arrive at the practice facility wearing a mask and wear masks when not engaged in practice activity. Organizations should follow their state and/or local guidance in regard to wearing masks.
- If someone feels sick, they must contact their coach and not attend practice. The individual should reach out to his or her doctor for assistance.
- If an individual has had a documented case of COVID-19, USRowing recommends they receive clearance from their doctor to resume training.
- If training in groups, it is recommended to train in the same group and not mix training groups in order to decrease the risk of exposure across groups.

### **Outdoor Facility Use**

- Organizations must follow state and/or local guidelines pertaining to parks and public waterways in the operation of on-the-water training.
- Athletes should use their own equipment or the same pieces of equipment daily if unable to have their own – single (1x), oars, and adaptive equipment such as seat cushions, grip aids, etc.
- The athlete should carry their specific oar set to and from the dock. Alternatively, the organization could have a club-appointed person (caddie) get equipment out of the boathouse to reduce the number of people in a boat bay.
- All oars should be wiped down with disinfectant before and after use.
- If shared equipment is being used, equipment should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected before and after each use.
- Adaptive equipment should be wiped down with disinfectant before and after use.
- When launching/landing, physical/social distancing should be maintained. Multiple boats on the dock should be allowed only if proper physical/social distancing requirements can be met.
- If possible, one dock/set of docks should be used for launching and a second dock/set of docks should be used for recovery. Separate docks should be used for para and adaptive athletes.

### **Indoor Facility Use**

- The operation of your indoor facility should follow state and/or local guidelines, particularly pertaining to gyms.
- Ergs and any other indoor equipment should be spaced at least twelve (12) feet apart and should be staggered so athletes are not in the slipstream of someone directly in front of them.
- All ergs and equipment must be wiped down with disinfectant before and after every use. No exceptions.
- When possible, open doors and windows to increase ventilation in rooms. The use of fans should be avoided. This is recommended for boat bays, as well as indoor training rooms.
- Locker rooms and other common areas should be closed. Athletes should come prepared to work out and leave the facility when finished.
- When meeting with coaches, physical/social distancing should be maintained. Masks should be worn by all parties.
- If possible, one entrance should be used for access to facility and another one for exit.
- Hand sanitizer should be provided at all entrances and exits.