



**pennsylvania**  
FISH AND BOAT COMMISSION

## BOAT RENTAL BUSINESSES

Boat rental businesses are also known as liveries. Liveries can be found at many state and county parks, along major rivers, water trails, and at some marinas, boat dealerships, and outdoor outfitters. Liveries provide introductory experiences for interested people to try boating without committing to the purchase and maintenance of boats and related equipment. Liveries also provide opportunities for experienced boaters to experiment with different types of boating or get on the water without transporting their own equipment to a new location. Some liveries provide unique boating opportunities like whitewater rafting. Because liveries provide a wide variety of services to a broad diversity of people, liveries must pay careful attention to safety.

Livery operations are regulated by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. Livery operators are required to comply with regulations relating to inspections, record keeping, safety orientations, required equipment, and accident reporting. Specific requirements can be found in the Commission's regulations at: [58 Pa. Code Chapter 117. Boat Rental Businesses \(pacodeandbulletin.gov\)](http://www.pacodeandbulletin.gov).

Safety orientations provided by liveries must comply with the Commission's guidelines, including:

- a review of the laws and regulations applicable to the type of boat being rented.
- local conditions and known boating hazards on the waters on which the boat will be used.
- proper handling characteristics of the rented boat.
- the use of safety equipment such as life jackets, fire extinguishers and visual distress signals (if applicable).

The following materials provide the minimum information to be covered in safety orientations. Boat rental businesses may use other materials, as appropriate, to supplement the required orientation.

1. PFBC posters containing Pennsylvania-specific regulations for all boat rental types are available as printer-friendly downloads at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com):
  - [Motorboat Poster](#)
  - [Personal Watercraft \(PWC\) Poster](#)
  - [Unpowered Boat Poster](#)
  - [Whitewater Safety Poster](#)
2. Videos for motorboat rentals may be viewed on-demand at [www.rentalboatsafety.com](http://www.rentalboatsafety.com) or <https://www.youtube.com/@RentalBoatSafetyTube/videos>. DVDs can be requested through the Rental Boat Safety website.
3. Spanish Speaking videos and resources can be found at <https://es.rentalboatsafety.com>

The following procedures are to be followed by livery operators when renting a boat to any person for operation on Pennsylvania waters. These instructions may take up to thirty minutes to complete. Instruction may be provided in group settings. All persons providing instruction for the boat rental business must have a permanent boating safety education certificate issued by the Commission. **Livery operators with questions may contact the PFBC Bureau of Boating at [RA-FBBOATRENTAL@pa.gov](mailto:RA-FBBOATRENTAL@pa.gov) or 717-705-7851.**

### **Unpowered Boat Rental**

- Display the Commission-provided safety orientation poster summarizing Pennsylvania regulations and boating tips relating to the proper operation of unpowered boats.
- Review each item on the poster with all individuals renting or using a boat.
- Describe all known boating hazards on the waters where the renter will use the boat. Include such hazards as dams, bridge piers, shallow areas, swim areas, obstructions in the water, slow-no-wake areas, docks, piers, and boating access areas.
- Provide all required safety equipment in accordance with the Commission's regulations.

### **Motorboat Rental (less than 25 horsepower)**

- Display the Commission-provided safety orientation poster summarizing Pennsylvania regulations and boating tips relating to the proper operation of motorboats.
- Review each item on the poster with all individuals renting or using a boat.
- Identify the designated area of operation.
- Describe all known boating hazards on the waters where the renter will use the boat. Include such hazards as dams, bridge piers, shallow areas, swim areas, obstructions in the water, slow-no-wake areas, docks, piers, and boating access areas.
- Provide all required safety equipment in accordance with the Commission's regulations.

### **Motorboat Rental (greater than 25 horsepower AND all personal watercraft)**

In addition to the motorboat rental items above:

- Operators who were born on or after January 1, 1982, must possess a boating safety education certificate to operate a motorboat greater than 25 horsepower or a PWC. If an operator does not have a boating safety education certificate issued or approved by the Commission, the livery must follow the procedure below to issue a Commission-provided temporary certificate.
  - Show the video supplied by the Commission to everyone who will be renting or operating a rented boat.
  - Administer the *Motorboat Rental Examination* to all operators of the rented boat.
  - Provide every operator of the rented boat a *Temporary Boating Safety Education Certificate for Rented Watercraft* on a template provided by the Commission. The livery operator or designee and the customer must both sign the certificate.
  - Instruct the operator that the *Temporary Boating Safety Education Certificate for Rented Watercraft* is valid only for the rental period and must be in the operator's possession.

Rental boat operators are encouraged to require renters to **always wear a life jacket** – even if not required by the boat rental business.