

**US Sailing Community Sailing Center
Accreditation Program
Guidelines**



INTRODUCTION

With hundreds of community sailing programs in the US Sailing database, the Community Sailing Center Accreditation Program (hereafter referred to as the Program) identifies and accredits community sailing programs that offer the highest and safest levels of boating education and public access across the United States. By only accrediting programs that meet or exceed these standards, as set forth in the application process, the Program sets the national standard for community sailing programs. Accredited programs use US Sailing Certified Instructors and Coaches with US Sailing's recommended best practices. This includes the use of up to date and nationally recognized emergency and safety procedures, clear documentation and record keeping procedures, instructor certification level, curricula, and instructional standards. Accredited Centers will be connected to other Accredited Centers, receive communication from the US Sailing Community Sailing Committee, and will help mentor newer programs into the Accreditation Program.

Programs of all types (year-round or seasonal, youth or adult, etc.) can apply for accreditation, provided they meet the specific guidelines set forth by the Accreditation Application. The Accreditation process does not have prerequisites for the types of boats that a center uses, nor is there a limitation on what age groups that they must teach. Each program is expected to use boats that are adequately designed for the skills being taught, are maintained regularly as needed for safety, and that are appropriate for the size of sailors (boat capacities and weight limits or minimums should be adhered to). In their educational programs, centers must use curricula that follow a standard skill progression based on the level of sailing being taught and the instructional methodologies found in US Sailing's Instructor Certification courses. The curricula should align with current US Sailing recommended skills such as the Little Red Book, Skill Up, and the [Reach STEM Initiative](#).

Please note that US Sailing also accredits [Keelboat Schools](#), [Powerboat Training Centers](#), and [Adaptive Sailing Centers](#) in addition to [Community Sailing Centers](#). US Sailing reserves the right to adjust accreditation requirements at any time.

MISSION OF COMMUNITY SAILING

The mission of the US Sailing Community Sailing Committee is to promote and support community sailing in the United States. We recognize diversity as essential to achieving our mission. For the Committee, diversity refers to the differences of culture, ethnicity, race, gender, age, beliefs, religion, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, family status, physical ability, cognitive ability, appearance, and ideas. We are committed to achieving greater diversity throughout the sport and fostering an inclusive environment. To help achieve this mission, the Committee seeks to identify centers that provide the highest quality of education and support access to sailing for all. These are centers that align with the standards set forth by US Sailing and offer safety, fun, and learning through their programming. Under the guidance of the Committee, US Sailing provides accreditation and resources to support the growth of Community Sailing.

Accredited Centers are expected to promote this mission in their operations and efforts, intentionally assisting the Community Sailing Committee in furthering diversity, equity, and inclusion within the sport of sailing. An Accredited Center differentiates itself from a sailing school by aiming to provide high quality sailing education, promoting environmental sustainability, and increasing the diversity of the population that has access to sailing education and the sport of sailing itself.

THE EVOLUTION OF US SAILING

Serving sailors since 1897 under the names of NAYRU and USYRU, the organization changed its name to US Sailing to describe its broader role more adequately beyond the administration of sailboat racing.

US Sailing derives its charter from the Amateur Sports Act of 1978 passed by Congress and, in this role, is the National Governing Body (NGB) for the sport of sailing and regulates all levels of competition. However, US Sailing reaches far beyond the competitive level.

From training programs to community sailing outreach, US Sailing has worked to improve the sport and expand its accessibility to bring new people in at all levels of expertise through grassroots development programs.

The organization is strongly committed to quality instruction to produce quality sailors through a national training system. It is a network of instructors, program organizers and some of the best sailing experts in the world. Across the country, US Sailing has approximately 7,000 instructors trained or certified in Small Boat, Keelboat, Powerboat, Adaptive, and Reach instructor courses. Over the last decade, US Sailing has been actively involved in the development of community sailing programs making sailing more available, safe, and fun. This program has proven to be extremely successful.

Today, US Sailing focuses on all aspects of recreational sailing, and continues as a non-profit organization with a mission to serve all sailors.

Directly speaking to the relationship between US Sailing and Community Sailing Programs, US Sailing uses the Accreditation Program to benefit both sailors and programs in the following areas:

- Increase use of national small boat sailing educational standards for programs, instructors, students, and sailors.
- Provide resources in safety, on-water best practices, and other relevant issues.
- Provide a training system that enforces consistent standards of quality and promotes and supports reciprocity among programs in the U.S.
- Issue student and instructor certifications.
- Utilization of superior quality instructor manuals, student books, and other teaching materials to support programs.
- Help programs in their efforts to offer opportunities for people to experience the joys and challenges of sailing.
- Encourage continued participation in the sport.
- Foster awareness of the importance of boating safety
- Work with industry manufacturers to support community boating programs in the U.S.
- Work with other marine industry organizations to stimulate more people to come into sailing and foster cooperative efforts to benefit the entire industry.
- Encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion within the sailing community.
- Offer Instructor and Instructor Trainer certification as well as continuing education opportunities.

COMMUNITY SAILING CENTER ACCREDITATION PROGRAM - MINIMUM REQUIREMENT GUIDELINES

The current guidelines for application in the US Sailing Community Sailing Center Accreditation program include:

1. Centers must be a member organization of US Sailing in good standing and complete the application.
2. Centers must be either a 501(c)3 or corporation open to the public without discrimination based on any protected class status. This clause may not be interpreted to halt any Center from refusing to serve persons deemed inappropriate, dangerous, or incompatible with teaching, learning, or community sailing. Military sailing programs are exempt from this requirement.
3. Accredited Centers agree to the terms, conditions, and rules in this document, as well as intentionally align with the mission of the Community Sailing Committee. This includes continuing and specific programming, initiatives, or other direct action with the aim of increasing its participant and leadership diversity, growing access to sailing, and environmental stewardship.
4. Centers apply as an organization and, as such, must show understanding from multiple positions of leadership that the Center intends to align itself with the mission of the Community Sailing Committee and the requirements of Accreditation. An applying Center should include documentation in its application that:
 - Acknowledges organizational leadership's understanding of the Community Sailing Committee's mission, application, and review process.
 - Authorizes the applying official to make the application with multiple leadership level signatures. In the case of 501(c)3 organizations, a board motion or similar official action may suffice. The Center's board members and principal staff must sign and complete the US Sailing Community Sailing Center Accreditation Application. If principal staff are seasonal, please indicate that in your application.
 - Provides a description of organizational leadership structure.
 - Confirms implementation of intentional organizational practices that:
 - Create greater diversity in the Center's leadership or programming.
 - Identify and lower the barriers towards participation in sailing.
 - Reduce the Center's overall environmental impact and/or increase environmental stewardship.
5. When onboard a program-owned or operated vessel that is underway, all aboard must wear a properly fitting and secured U.S. Coast Guard approved Life Jacket.
6. Centers must have a website with a clear process for members of the public to sign up for programming.
7. Centers must provide written proof of having been in business at least three years (such as a certificate of incorporation and course offering calendars). At the sole discretion of US Sailing, this may include operations under another entity, DBA, etc. A Center must notify US Sailing of any change of ownership, changes to its legal business status, or dissolution.
8. Staff Certification Requirements:
 - Each individual on-water sailing class/camp/lesson/program must be supervised by an on-the-water US Sailing Certified Instructor who is assigned to that class/camp/lesson/program.

- Sailing instructors who teach courses that result in a US Sailing certification must be certified to the level of the course they are teaching and equipment they are operating.
 - While a US Sailing Certified Instructor must supervise each individual group from on-the-water, non-certified instructors can work under the supervision of the Certified Instructor.
 - US Sailing Instructor Certifications must be current and require current US Sailing membership, current Instructor certification (renewal is every three years), First Aid/CPR and SafeSport certificates to be valid.
 - It is recommended that program directors/head instructors or volunteer managers are Small Boat Level 1 certified or have taken the Level 3 Head Instructor course.
 - Applicants must provide current US Sailing member ID numbers, staff names, and the level of instructor certification in the application. If a seasonal facility is applying, the list may be of the past season's staff and certifications supplemented with the written intention to meet the requirements again in the coming season.
9. Centers must provide evidence of owning or renting a facility with a point of contact that is accessible to the public. Evidence should take the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), lease, property tax statement, or other legal documentation of a lease or ownership. Provide a brief description of the facility and a photograph of each aspect of the facility used by the public. This includes but is not limited to:
- A structure that houses the business offices for the Center.
 - A classroom area suitable for conducting classes.
 - A storm shelter.
 - Other entities nearby (yacht clubs, marinas, etc.) which cater to the boating public.
10. Centers must submit copies of:
- Emergency and Safety Procedure and Protocols.
 - Include an Emergency Action Plan, Emergency Card (with map), and site-specific Safety Manual. Examples provided below are from the Gowrie Group and should be modified for individual site conditions and risks:
 - [Gowrie Jr. Sailing Safety Guide](#)
 - [Club and Sailing Organization Safety Manual](#)
 - [Emergency Card Template](#)
 - Liability waiver, incident report, and accident report.
 - State business license and federal tax ID numbers.
 - Overall program curriculum - this should include, for each individual sailing course/class:
 - Course/class syllabi.
 - Sample of individual lesson plans.
 - Student evaluation forms or checklists (completed by staff to offer feedback to students and to track student progress through sailing skills).
 - Forms for the evaluation of staff.
 - Diversity, equity, inclusion, environmental stewardship, or other initiatives including any measurable outcomes the organization may use to review or gauge its effectiveness.
 - Publicly available mission statement or similar organizational documents.
 - Leadership structure including person responsible for implementation of this program.

11. Centers' student skill evaluation criteria must meet or exceed standards found in the US Sailing's Small Boat Beginner Sailor Certification Record Book (commonly called the "Little Red Book") or Skill Up App, which stipulates boats to be used are defined as dinghies, keel and centerboard day sailors and multihulls that are generally under 20 feet and without live-aboard accommodations.
12. Centers acknowledge and agree that they are subject to the jurisdiction of the US Center for SafeSport and shall abide by all US Center for SafeSport policies and procedures. A Center's SafeSport obligations include the following:
 - Ensure that all Center staff and board members annually complete the US Center for SafeSport's online child abuse prevention training ("SafeSport Training").
 - Additionally, a Center must ensure all other volunteers who have regular contact with, or authority over minors, during programming complete at least one of the US Center for SafeSport's "SafeSport for Volunteers" online course.
 - Ensure that all Center in-program activities are conducted in accordance with the US Center for SafeSport's One-on-One Abuse Prevention Policies. Please see Section IV of the US Sailing SafeSport Handbook for a full description of all applicable One-on-one Abuse Prevention Policies. The handbook can be found on the US Sailing [website](#).
 - A Center must submit to US Sailing annually data regarding the following:
 - Reports of emotional or physical misconduct made to the Center:
 - (i) Total reported incidents of alleged emotional misconduct
 - (ii) Total reported incidents of alleged physical misconduct
 - (iii) Total number of investigations of alleged emotional misconduct
 - (iv) Total number of investigations of alleged physical misconduct
 - (v) Total number of violations for emotional misconduct adjudicated by the Center
 - (vi) Total number of violations for physical misconduct adjudicated by Center
 - Reports to the Center that a participant violated the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP):
 - (i) Total reported incidents of alleged violations of the MAAPP, by policy type
 - (ii) Total number of investigations of alleged violations of the MAAPP
 - (iii) Total number of violations of the MAAPP.
 - Reports to the Center that a participant engaged in retaliation:
 - (i) Total reported incidents of alleged retaliation
 - (ii) Total number of investigations of alleged retaliation
 - (iii) Total number of violations of retaliation policy separated by cases adjudicated by NGB and cases adjudicated by its LAO
13. Centers shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the US Center for SafeSport's Response and Resolution authority, including compliance with all US Center for SafeSport Response and Resolution procedures, requests, resolutions, temporary measures, and sanctions. Please review the SafeSport Code [here](#) for more information about the US Center for SafeSport's Response and Resolution authority.
14. Centers are subject to a physical or virtual site inspection and ongoing visits by US Sailing representatives. Such inspection includes (but is not limited to) the standard items found in the US Sailing Community Sailing Center Accreditation Program guidelines. Site inspections are also intended to identify site specific concerns that may

not be adequately accounted for in the Accreditation Program Guidelines. Site visits are performed on a case-by-case basis and may not be a mandatory part of the Accreditation Application for some Centers. However, a site visit may occur if a US Sailing representative is not familiar with your program.

15. Fee Structure:

- Annual Basic Organizational Membership dues for US Sailing.
- Annual Community Sailing Center Accreditation Program fee for US Sailing.
- Programs that hold multiple accreditations have a different fee structure.
- One invoice will be sent to the organization with all dues itemized. The invoice will arrive within a month of the next year for which it is due.
- US Sailing reserves the right to adjust any aspect of the fee structure at any time.
- Any Center that declares bankruptcy or violates any of requirements or terms specified in the US Sailing Community Sailing Accreditation requirements can be terminated with 30 days written notice or suspended until discrepancies are resolved.

MINIMUM INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS SUGGESTED

General Liability:

Marine General Liability Included

Each Occurrence: \$1,000,000

General Aggregate \$2,000,000

Medical Expense Limit \$5,000

Protection & Indemnity:

\$1,000,000 limit any one occurrence/accident

Workers Compensation:

Each Accident	\$500,000
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Disease – Policy Limit	\$500,000
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Disease – Each Employee	\$500,000
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Center must provide a certificate of insurance from an insurer with a minimum best rating of A-Minus or better for minimum requirements above including:

- General Liability
- Protection & Indemnity
- Including Sailing Instruction Coverage
- Workers Compensation Statutory limits
- \$500,000 Employer's Liability

The primary P&I coverage must cover students on boats owned, chartered, leased, or borrowed by the Center. In the comments section of the Certificate, it shall state that students are covered while aboard boats owned, chartered, leased, or borrowed by the Center.

Each organization should consult with their insurance agency to confirm that all applicable insurance coverages are in place.

IMPLEMENTATION & OVERSIGHT

Site visits are not required but may be performed at the discretion of US Sailing. A video tour may also be requested.

Programs with a change in leadership must notify US Sailing immediately to set up a phone call to update the new manager on the requirements to maintain the Accreditation. The contact email address is:
communitysailing@ussailing.org.

Programs who merge with other organizations, change their curriculum, EAP documents, or structure, must notify US Sailing immediately and submit a new application.

US Sailing reserves the right at its sole discretion to suspend or terminate a Center's accreditation for non-compliance with any term or obligation contained herein.

REVIEW PROCESS

Once Centers submit a completed application their materials will be reviewed by the Accreditation Working Party of the Community Sailing Committee. If any documents are missing, they will be contacted by a US Sailing staff member. Upon receipt of missing materials, their application will be reviewed a second time. If the applicant doesn't meet the requirements of the program after a second review, they are asked to wait at least one year before reapplying. If approved, programs are required to submit payment for accreditation upon receipt of the approval email. Upon receipt of payment, programs will receive a certificate and their status will be reflected in their organization member profile on MyUSSailing. They will also receive a US Sailing burgee and annual benefits.

MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION

Centers will maintain their accreditation status by completing the follow annually -

- Pay US Sailing Basic Organizational Membership
- Pay US Sailing Community Sailing Center Accreditation Program dues
- Sign attestation of US Sailing Community Sailing Center Accreditation Program - Minimum Requirement Guidelines.

The maintaining and reaccreditation process is currently being reviewed and is subject to change.

YOU'RE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE

In addition to all the benefits your community sailing program will receive, you are invited to offer feedback to refine the quality and reach of our programs. With guidance from community sailing programs like yours, US Sailing can create and provide materials, credentials, and support for sailing organizations. If you are interested in being involved in community sailing through one of our subcommittees, or if you have general questions, please contact the Youth Department, who oversees Community Sailing, at communitysailing@ussailing.org

