

Explore North Coast Guidelines for Paddle Events During the COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 is a viral disease transmitted by respiratory droplets (aerosols). It can cause a wide range of mild to serious health effects, including death. The disease can be transmitted by individuals who are not experiencing symptoms. Any contact among people introduces the risk of transmission: closer contact and/or more people increases that risk. In an effort to minimize the risk of ENC members and guests acquiring COVID-19, the ENC Board has instituted the following guidelines for all future paddle events until further notice:

1. General Considerations for ENC paddlers and Paddle Hosts
 - a. COVID-19 training is available upon request for Paddle Hosts.
 - b. Paddle Hosts always have the right to not host a paddle, if they are uncomfortable, for any reason, with doing so.
 - c. Paddle Hosts have the authority to disallow any ENC paddler or guest paddler to participate in the event they are hosting.
 - d. Paddle Hosts may elect to find a co-host for any paddle.
 - e. Paddlers are expected to provide their own Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), including a mask and hand sanitizer.
 - f. Paddle event participants are expected to have followed the current [Humboldt County Shelter in Place Orders](#) guidelines in order to participate in an ENC event. This includes participation by out-of-town or other guests.
 - g. Social distancing is mandatory from all participants at all times during ENC events.
 - h. Maximum paddle group size for ENC events is 8 paddlers, exclusive of the Paddle Host.
 - i. Paddle Hosts may limit participation to fewer than 8 paddlers.
 - i. An annual Communicable Disease Waiver (available on the website explorenorthcoast.net) is required for all participants (ENC members or guests) in addition to the standard ACA Waiver.
 - j. In an effort to minimize risk and higher likelihood of personal contact, ENC will not sponsor any surf zone, rescue practice, or camping events for the foreseeable future. Ocean paddles will be closely monitored for safe paddling conditions. Rock Gardens are off-limits for ENC-sponsored paddle events. Paddle Hosts are expected to err on the side of caution with respect to ocean safety and have the ultimate authority to limit activities on the water.
 - k. Paddlers are expected to be able to assess their personal kayaking skill level with respect to any paddling event and avoid conditions that might result in necessary rescue.

2. PRE-TRIP

- a. Participants must RSVP the Paddle Host within 48 hours of the paddling event in order to participate.
 - i. Paddle host limits participants to 8 paddlers, exclusive of the host.
- b. Pre-Trip Self Screening: participants self-assess and acknowledge that they are healthy to participate to the best of their knowledge prior to attending an ENC paddling event.
 - i. COVID-19 symptoms include: fever (temp greater than 100.4 F), chills, dry cough, shortness of breath sore throat, loss of sense of smell/taste, muscle aches, headache, diarrhea, and fatigue. Note that COVID-19 patients may have none, some, or other symptoms.
 - ii. Participants with *any* symptoms should not participate in the event.
 - iii. Participants who have been unable to follow current [Humboldt County Shelter in Place Orders](#) guidelines for any reason within the two-week period before a paddling event *should not participate*.
- c. Paddle Host sends a pre-Trip email to all who RSVP'd (with a cc to the Paddle Host Coordinator) that explains how the trip will be managed.
 - i. The email should include this statement at the beginning: "No organization can absolutely eliminate the risks associated with COVID-19 and other infectious diseases". In order to minimize and manage risk, the email should also include the following requirements:
 1. Participants should not carpool with anybody they don't live with.
 2. Participants must observe social distancing prior to attending and during the event.
 3. Participants must wear a mask on land as they prepare their boat and gear for launch.
 4. Participants should actively avoid any situation on the water that might result in their needing a rescue.
 5. Participants are responsible for bringing their own PPE, signed Communicable Disease and ACA waivers (once per year).
 - a. Participants should provide their own pen if waivers or other paperwork is to be filled out on site.
 6. Participants must provide their own boat, gear, food, water, etc.

3. TRIP: PRE-LAUNCH

- a. At the event all paddlers **MUST** wear face masks on land prior to launching.
- b. Paddle Host reminds paddlers of COVID-19 Risks and of the importance of social distancing on and off the water.
- c. Paddle Host checks in with individuals to ensure, as best as is possible, that participants are asymptomatic for COVID-19.

- d. ENC recommends that paddlers manage transporting their boat to the water (or back to their vehicle) without assistance, if possible.
 - i. Kayak transport wheels (i.e., dollies) are the preferred and safest method to transport boats from the vehicle to the launch site and back.
 - ii. If assistance is needed to carry kayaks to the water (or to the vehicle), it should be with someone the paddler lives with.
 - iii. If a non-house mate assists carrying the boat to the water (or to the vehicle), paddlers should be certain to disinfect their boat once they have returned home.
 - iv. In order to minimize potential contact with exhaled droplets or aerosols, Paddle Hosts should remind paddlers, prior to launching, to maintain at least one boat-length from other paddlers and not to paddle directly in line with another paddler(S).

4. TRIP: ON THE WATER

- a. Paddlers should stay at least one boat length from other boaters.
- b. Paddlers **MUST** avoid risky behaviors and situations on the water that could result in rescue.
- c. For ocean paddles, paddlers will avoid the surf zone and rock gardens.

5. POST TRIP

- a. Contact Log: Paddle hosts will keep track of any close contacts between individual paddlers, including themselves (for example, if a rescue occurs, names and contact information of all involved in the rescue should be recorded).
- b. If a participant exhibits COVID-19 symptoms or tests positive for the virus, within 14 days after a paddling event, *they should contact the Paddle Host Coordinator as soon as possible* (steven.a.smith71@gmail.com or 707 499-5952)
- c. Paddle Host Coordinator will contact each paddler 7 days after the paddle to inquire about the emergence of any COVID-19 symptoms after the paddling event.