

RYA Guidance on sailing & racing with participants from different households during COVID-19 in Northern Ireland



Introduction

This document provides measures for participants when sailing and racing with those from other households. It should be read alongside the latest Government regulations. Clubs and events organising authorities should refer to all **current** RYA and Government COVID-19 guidance.

Wherever possible, the relevant NI Executive social distancing guidance should be adhered to. In circumstances afloat where social distancing is not feasible, mitigations should be implemented in line with the advice within this document. This document has been prepared as part of the RYA's guidance in conjunction with the UK Government Return to Team Sports Framework.

This document refers to the current UK Government and NI Executive guidance for Northern Ireland and is subject to change in response to the current Regulations and Guidance, community prevalence of COVID-19 and updated NI Executive/ SportNI guidance.

It may only come into operation when outlined on the RYANI Return to Boating Framework.

Essential first steps

All participants prior to sailing with people from other households

- Self-symptom check before leaving home
- Assess personal risk and that of your team
- Limit or avoid car sharing
- Register your attendance with the host club for test and trace, and where possible download and activate [Stop Covid NI app](#)
- Arrive in sailing kit where possible
- Sanitise hands on arrival and prior to touching any shared surface
- Maintain social distancing at all times whilst ashore before launching /after recovery
- Follow all guidance outlined by the venue

Remember the RYA COVID-19 Principle

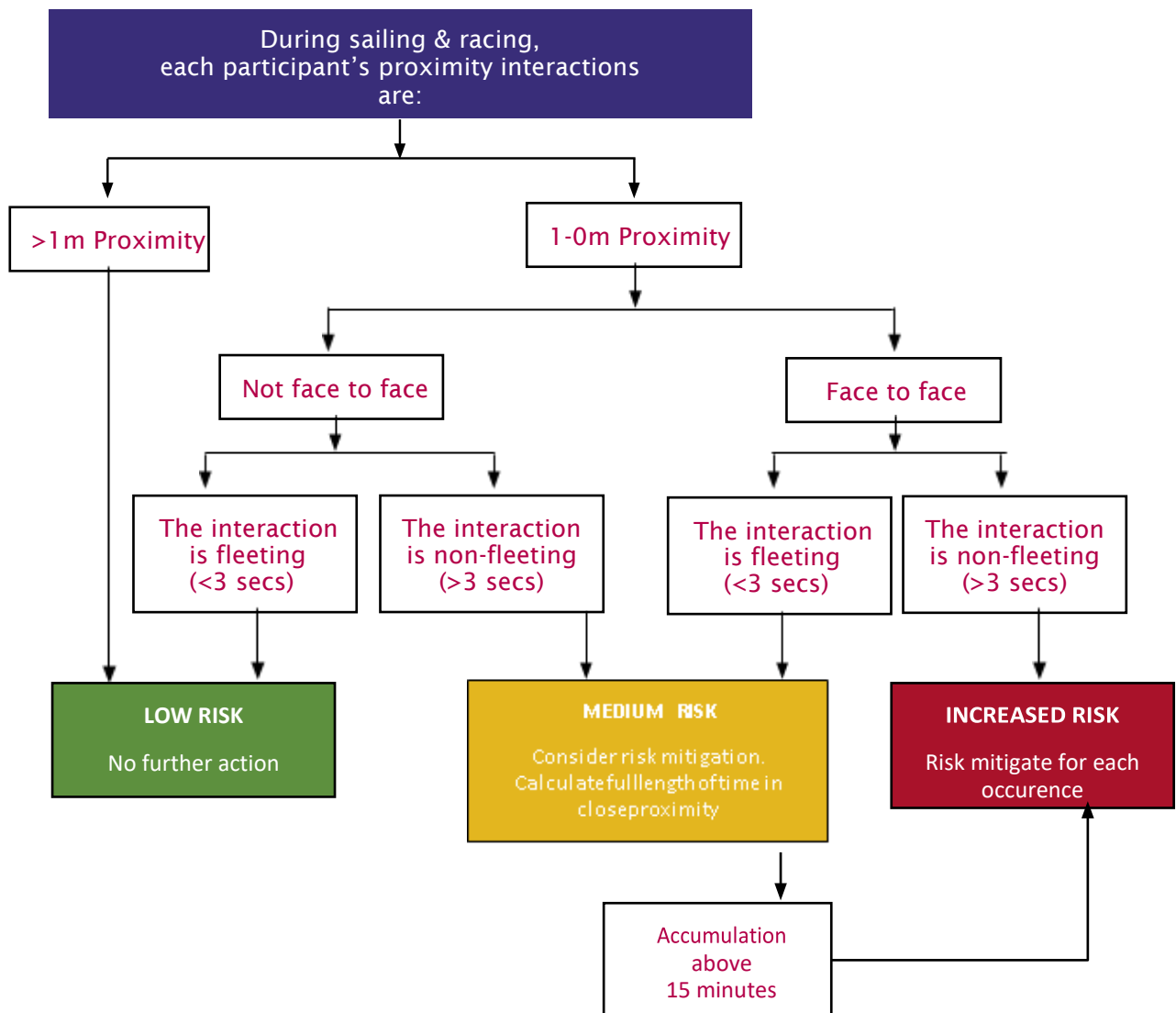
Be considerate: be mindful of the potential impact that you could have on other water users and local communities. Take an extra cautious approach to your boating and do not place unnecessary extra strain on the RNLI and emergency services.

Understanding the risk

Whilst sailing, there will be particular times where you will likely come into closer contact with those you are sailing with. This may be for a relatively short period of time or it may be for longer. If the interaction is relatively fleeting or short-term, the risk is relatively low. However, if the interaction is for longer period of time and face to face, the risk is much higher and mitigations will need to be considered to lower the risk of transmission of Coronavirus.

It is important that all participants take personal responsibility for evaluating any potential risks to themselves or others. It is especially important that skippers or those with responsibility for multiple crew from different households consider any COVID-19 related risks and associated mitigations as outlined in this document.

Here is a flow diagram to help you understand and mitigate the risk:



If you are within the medium or increased risk category, you will need to introduce mitigations to control the risk. Here are some mitigations we advise you follow:

No.	Mitigation	Applies To	Conducted By
1	Pre-attendance Symptom Check	All participants	All participants
2	Maintain record of participant contact details for 21 days	All participants	Organising Authority (maybe delegated to skippers)
3	Normal social distancing protocols to be followed onshore	All participants	All participants
4	When sailing, if unable to maintain more than 1 m separation then maintain at least 0.5m separation between crew, avoid face to face and consider other non-face to face mitigation	Competitors	Competitors
5	Organise manoeuvres to maximise social distancing and avoid face to face where this would normally occur	Competitors	Competitors
6	For 2-person winches use with 1 person or wear a facecovering	Competitors	Competitors
7	When >1 person below deck, maintain social distancing, limit duration to less than 5 minutes & regularly clean shared surfaces or equipment	Yacht racers	Yacht racers
8	For races of a duration to require sleeping onboard; until step 4 only crew from one household permitted below deck at any one time.	Yacht racers	Organising Authority
9	Ensure numbers onboard Committee Boats are limited dependent on size of boat to allow minimum 1m spacing	Race Management team	Organising Authority
10	At end of the day or before use by another person clean down shared equipment	All participants	All participants
11	At end of each race and more frequently where practicable, practice hand hygiene	All participants	All participants

Face coverings

If you choose to use a face covering as mitigation, please ensure you understand the [Government guidance](#) on face coverings. We appreciate that face coverings may not be suitable for all boats, in all situations and that they may not be suitable when exercising.

Test & Trace Contacts

Based on our risk assessments, the RYA believe that the following should be considered as close contacts for the purpose of test & trace in the context of sailing:

1. Those who have sat within 1m of each other on the side deck for more than 15 minutes;
2. Those who have been below deck at the same time for a total of more than 5 minutes;
3. Those who have recovered someone or been recovered from the water;
4. Those who have had a non-fleeting face to face interaction within 1m of another crew member

Appendix 1: RYA Risk Assessment for sailing and racing with participants from different households

Table 1: Droplet transmission

The risk associated with each action in an activity based on duration and proximity of participants.

Activity	Proximity between sailors	Face to Face?	Interaction time	Risk Level	Accumulation time (if medium risk)	Cumulative Risk Level	Additional Mitigations Required	Final Risk Level
Small Sailboats								
Rigging	>1m	No	N/A	Low Risk	N/A	Low Risk	None	Low Risk
Pre-start & post race	>1m	No	N/A	Low Risk	N/A	Low Risk	None	Low Risk
Sailing straight line - sitting on the deck - not face to face	<1m	No	Non-fleeting	Medium Risk	>15 mins	Increased Risk	No shouting. Min 0.5m separation	Medium Risk
Sailing straight line - trapezing	>1m	No	N/A	Low Risk	N/A	Low Risk	None	Low Risk
Manoeuvring	<1m	Possibly	Fleeting	Medium Risk	<15 mins	Medium Risk	Face to face to be avoided. Organise manoeuvres to maximise social distancing	Low Risk
Mark Rounding (Spinnaker hoist & drop)	>1m	No	N/A	Low Risk	N/A	Low Risk	None	Low Risk
Yachts								
Rigging	>1m	No	N/A	Low Risk	N/A	Low Risk	None	Low Risk
Pre-start & post-race	>1m	No	N/A	Low Risk	N/A	Low Risk	None	Low Risk
Sailing straight line (sitting on the rail)	<1m	No	Non-fleeting	Medium Risk	>15 mins	Increased Risk	Min 0.5m separation.	Medium Risk
Manoeuvring	<1m	Possibly	Fleeting	Medium Risk	<15 mins	Medium Risk	Face to face to be avoided. Organise manoeuvres to maximise social distancing	Low Risk
Mark Rounding (Spinnaker hoist & drop)	<1m	No	Non-fleeting	Medium Risk	<15 mins	Medium Risk	Avoid shouting. Min 0.5m separation	Low Risk
Winch operation by >1 person	<1m	Possibly	Non-fleeting	Increased Risk	<15 mins	Increased Risk	Consider single person use where possible. Where not face coverings to be mandatory.	Low risk
Below deck during, before or after racing	>1m	Enclosed space	Non-fleeting	Increased Risk	<15 mins	Increased Risk	Maximise ventilation where safe to do so. Regular cleaning of shared surfaces. >1 person below deck only for short (<5 mins) duration or where required for safety	Medium Risk
Below deck Offshore >1 person (races of a duration where it is necessary to sleep aboard)	>1m	Enclosed space	Non-fleeting	Increased Risk	>15mins	Increased Risk	For races of a duration to require sleeping onboard until step 4 only crew from one household permitted below deck at any one time. From step 4 maximum of 6 crew permitted below deck at any one time Maximise ventilation where safe to do so.	Medium Risk
Support Boats – RIBs or similar (2 persons onboard)								
Small Support Boats	Dependent on size of RIB may be <1m	No	Non-fleeting	Medium Risk	>15 mins	Increased Risk	Utilise same household crews OR Single Manning OR Face covering where >1m cannot be maintained	Low Risk
Larger Support Boats	>1m	No	N/A	Low Risk	N/A	Low Risk	None	Low Risk
Rescue of person in water	<1m	No	Non-fleeting	Medium Risk	<15 mins	Medium Risk	Wear face covering. Ensure casualty is facing away from safety boat. If able casualty to self-rescue using strop or ladder. If casualty conscious and able they should wear face covering once aboard safety boat	Medium Risk

Official Boats – Committee Vessel (CV)								
Transit to / from race area	>1m	N/A	N/A	Low Risk	N/A	Low Risk	None	Low Risk
Normal operation - start & finishing	Varies dependent on size of CV	No	Non-fleeting	Medium Risk	>15 mins	Increased Risk	Maintain social distancing where possible. Remain on deck. Consider face coverings and other mitigation where appropriate.	Low Risk

Table 2: Fomite Transmission

The risk associated with the handling and transfer of equipment in the sport.

There are various items of equipment which may be used onboard a sailboat which have been identified below. Many items of equipment, such as ropes, may be manufactured from specialist materials which would be degraded by using bleach or other harsh chemicals. Therefore, the manufacturer's recommendations for cleaning of specialist fabrics, fibres and materials should be followed. For materials that are not liable to degradation then either warm soapy water being sponged down and then flushed with fresh water prior to being allowed to dry is recommended or being sprayed with a 60 – 90% alcohol-based solution.

Item	Material	When	Use	Other Mitigations	RAG Rating
Competitor Equipment					
Sheets, guys and running rigging	Rope - various types	End of day	Potentially all crew	Regular hand cleaning	Medium Risk
Wheel or tiller	Metal, composite or plastic	End of day	Helm only	If necessary to change helm clean first	Low Risk
Winch Handles	Metal & plastic	Between races	Trimmers & pitman	Ensure each trimmer has their own winch handle	Low Risk
Clutches	Metal & plastic	End of day	Pitman only	If necessary to change pitman clean first	Low Risk
Sails	Various	End of day	Foredeck crew	Regular hand cleaning	Low Risk
Officials Equipment					
Flags, poles & halyards	Fabric; wood metal or plastic; rope	End of day	Dedicated individual	Each flag to be dedicated to an individual and not used by anyone else unless cleaned	Low Risk
Radios	Plastic	End of day	Dedicated individual	Except in emergency if radio to be used by someone else handset to be wiped down first	Low Risk
Sound Signals	Plastic or metal	Between races	Dedicated individual	Manual air trumpets not to be used. Whistles and gas canister or electric type air horns acceptable	Low Risk
Race Marks & associated tackle	Fabric	When recovered ashore	Mark Layers	Marks & tackle to be handled by dedicated individual when loaded into mark laying boat. Once put in the water then considered to have been washed	Low Risk

It is expected that where there is a change of crew on a vessel then all fomites listed above will be cleaned or left for a period of 48 hours before a new crew boards the vessel.

Guidance updated: April 2021