

SISKA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Approved by Executive February 2023

Introduction:

The following SISKA Policies and Procedures are based on the SISKA Constitution and Bylaws and are authorised by section 4.4 of the Bylaws.

1.0 Protection of Personal Privacy:

As a society, SISKA complies with The Personal Information Protection and Electronic Document Act, for the privacy and security of your personal information. SISKA will only use this information for its normal business processes, such as processing membership forms and payment, and communicating notices of activities, and other SISKA information of interest to members. Any use other than the above of your personal information will be approved by you in advance.

2.0 SISKA Code of Conduct:

- 1) To ensure the success and enjoyment of club activities for all members, SISKA requires that all members and their guests will at all times be respectful of their fellow club members, and conduct themselves in a manner that complies with the SISKA Policies and Procedures.
- 2) Club members and their guests will be attentive to, and follow the guidance of designated leaders of any club activity, especially when guidance concerns issues of personal or group safety.

3.0 SISKA Fees:

- 1) Membership fees are due on January 1st of each year.
- 2) Course fees will be prepaid and are non-refundable except in extraordinary circumstances.
- 3) Guests are welcome to participate in three (3) club activities or events, provided they are sponsored by a club member and approved for the activity, but are thereafter expected to join the club.

4.0 Liability Waivers:

- 1) Signed liability waivers are needed for all members (including family members) upon joining SSKA or renewing membership after an absence of one year or more.
- 2) Guests approved by a designated club leader to participate in an on-water activity must also complete a liability waiver in advance. <https://waiver.fr/p-Lax5v>

5.0 Club Paddles:

5.1 General

- 1) Club paddles are those trips approved by the SSKA Executive either directly or by delegating the responsibility to the Club Paddle Coordinator.
- 2) Club paddles shall only be undertaken if a trip leader is available.
- 3) There will be a minimum of three (3) kayaks on club paddles.
- 4) All paddle participants must wear an approved PFD.
- 5) Members will inform their guests of SSKA Policies and Procedures, and any paddle guidelines. All guests, once approved by the paddle leader, must sign a waiver before participating in a club paddle.

5.2 Paddle Leader Qualifications

Paddle leaders shall have:

- 1) A valid Paddle Canada (PC) Level 2 Certification; valid British Canoe Union (BCU) Star 3; valid Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of BC (SKGABC) Assistant Overnight Guide; or other valid certification of an equivalent or higher level, and
- 2) A Marine Radio Operator's certificate.

5.3 Paddle Leader Authority and Responsibilities

Paddle Leader Authority

- 1) The paddle leader has the authority to refuse participation on a paddle to any member or guest if they feel the participant might pose a safety concern either to themselves or to anyone else participating in the paddle. e.g. not having the necessary skills, safety gear or appropriate paddle clothing.
- 2) The paddle leader shall have the final say regarding acceptable clothing.
- 3) The leader has the authority to limit the number of participants on the paddle as per the posted advertisement, and leaders may establish a waiting list.

- 4) The leader is the authority on any paddle unless they choose to delegate that authority or any part thereof to another experienced paddler, and communicates this delegation to the paddle participants.

Paddle Leader Responsibilities

A) Pre-Paddle

- 1) The Paddle Coordinator and/or trip leaders shall choose a paddle location/destination that is suitable for the designated skill level of the paddle, as per the current SISKKA Paddle Guidelines. https://siska.ca/prod/docs_private/siska_docs/siska_paddle_guidelines.pdf
- 2) The paddle description must be approved by the SISKKA Paddle Coordinator, who may seek the advice of the Safety Coordinator, before it is advertised to the members.
- 3) A description of the proposed paddle will be made available including time, launch site and route, Plan A and Plan B in case of inclement weather/water conditions, any skill level requirements, paddle participation restrictions (e.g. numbers, skill level), a contact name and method for obtaining further information, and any other pertinent information.

B. Day of Paddle – Pre-Launch

- 1) The leader is responsible for checking the marine weather forecast and deciding whether or not the paddle plan is still suitable or whether the paddle will be cancelled for safety reasons. If the paddle is to be cancelled, every effort will be made to notify the participants.
- 2) The paddle leader must ensure that the paddle manifest is completed.
- 3) The leader must ensure that all paddlers including guests have signed a waiver.
- 4) The leader will ensure that all participants gather together for a ‘beach talk’ before anyone launches their kayak. The beach talk will address the following:
 - a) Introductions – including any new members or guests
 - b) Clarification that the leader is the authority unless the leader chooses to delegate their authority or any part thereof to another experienced paddle
 - c) Paddle Plan – all expectations such as paddle course, paddle speed, paddle focus, lunch destination, return time, etc. will be clearly outlined
 - d) Expected weather and sea conditions
 - e) Group safety plan – these may include designated leader, designated sweep, buddy system, radio station monitoring, paddle signs, group cohesiveness, etc. (Note: Participants may be instructed to stay within vocal range of each other.)
 - f) Personal health or safety concerns – health and safety risks will be addressed by the leader including communicable diseases such as Covid-19, and anyone with a particular concern will be asked to speak with the leader confidentially in advance or after the beach talk.

g) The leader will ascertain that all paddlers are wearing clothing suitable for the expected conditions.

6) The leader will ensure that the appropriate extra group equipment is carried (e.g. charts and compass, emergency signalling devices, first aid kit, at least one spare paddle per two kayaks).

7) The leader will carry a functional VHF radio.

C. Day of Paddle – On Water

- 1) Once on the water, the leader will attempt to conduct the paddle as advertised, and as discussed on the beach.
- 2) The paddling group will not split up, except as directed by the paddle leader. For safety reasons the leader may decide it is advisable to return a paddler(s) to the launch site or another takeout site in advance of the return of the main group. If practicable, the person(s) will be escorted by a paddler with PC Level 2 skills and a radio or cell phone, and one other paddler. If possible, as soon as the escorted paddler(s) has landed the escort will notify the leader of the group's safe landing.

D. Day of Paddle – Post

- 1) Incidents involving safety concerns will be reported to the Safety Director within 24 hours of the incident.
- 2) Ensure the manifest is updated to reflect the actual participants.

5.4 Paddle Participant Responsibilities

- 1) Members and guests participating in a club paddle must comply with the expectations and all of any requirements advertised for the particular paddle, SISKKA Policies and Procedures, Paddle Guidelines, and the Canadian Coast Guard Safe Boating Guide.
https://tc.canada.ca/sites/default/files/migrated/tp_511e.pdf
- 2) Paddle participants must attend only trips that they are competent to handle.
- 3) Paddle participants must be properly equipped for the trip according to Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) regulations. https://tc.canada.ca/sites/default/files/migrated/tp_511e.pdf (pg. 17)
- 4) Paddle participants must attend the pre-paddle 'beach talk' before launching on the water.
- 5) Paddle participants must understand and accept the trip leader's responsibilities and instructions, and cooperate with them in performing these duties.
- 6) Paddle participants must inform the leader of personal circumstances that could affect their performance and advise the leader at any time during the trip if they experience discomfort or difficulty.

- 7) Paddle participants must not attend trips if they have a communicable disease such as Covid-19, or if they have been exposed to someone with such a disease as defined by Public Health Authorities prior to the trip.
- 8) Paddle participants must respect Public Health guidelines for physical distancing (2m) and contagion control regarding communicable diseases such as Covid-19.
- 9) Paddle participants must comply with additional guidelines as established and updated by the Club for health and safety such as those established during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 10) Paddle participants must stay with the group at all times unless approved by the leader.

5.5 Minimum Necessary Equipment for All Paddlers

- a) A kayak deemed seaworthy by the trip leader. The craft must have flotation and (cord not bungee) perimeter deck lines. Loops or handles at both ends for grabbing or carrying are recommended
- b) A paddle, CCG approved PFD, throw line, pump or bailer, spray skirt, sound signalling device (whistle or air horn), and navigation lights if travelling after sunset, before sunrise, or at times of restricted visibility
- e) A dry bag containing spare clothes
- f) Appropriate cold water immersion wear is strongly recommended (i.e. drysuit or wetsuit, other insulating clothing such as merino wool or polar fleece tops and bottoms). The leader shall have the final say whether other clothing is acceptable for the paddle
- g) Adequate food and water for the duration of the trip

5.6 Classification of Paddles

Expectations in terms of paddle trip length and conditions are set out in the SISKa Paddle Guidelines. https://siska.ca/prod/docs_private/siska_docs/siska_paddle_guidelines.pdf.

6.0 Courses and Clinics:

- 1) Only club members may participate in courses and clinics unless otherwise authorized by an Executive member or a designated club trip leader.
- 2) In order to address members' needs and interests, SISKa may offer a range of kayaking skill and knowledge development courses and clinics, both on and off water.
- 3) SISKa may offer Paddle Canada Basic and Level 1 courses to members. However, SISKa will refer requests for other Paddle Canada courses, such as Level 2 and above, to private kayak instruction businesses, especially to those businesses willing to offer discount pricing to SISKa members.

7.0 Reimbursement of Expenses and Costs:

Instructor Expenses

- 1) All active Paddle Canada (PC) Club instructors, upon approval by Executive, may be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses directly related to instructing a PC course for SISKKA.
- 2) All club members who take and pass a PC instructor course may, upon approval by Executive, be reimbursed 25% of the costs of the course (up to \$150) after instructing one SISKKA course in the first twelve months, an additional 25% of the costs of the course (up to \$150) after instructing one SISKKA course in the second twelve months, and an additional 25% of the costs of the course (up to \$150) after instructing one SISKKA course in the third twelve month period.
- 3) All club PC instructors may be reimbursed for 50% of their annual PC instructor certification fee per day of instruction of a PC course for SISKKA, up to a maximum of 100% within twelve months
- 4) Assistant PC instructors qualify for reimbursements as specified in 6 (1), and 6 (3), if their assistance is required to instruct due to class size (student: instructor ratio shall be no more than 4:1)

Paddle Leader Costs

- 1) New paddle leaders are offered, as an incentive, 25% of the cost of their Level 2 and VHF course to be reimbursed annually up to three years, provided the member leads at least two paddles per year.
- 2) Paddle leaders may be reimbursed for approved costs related to leading paddles, such as site launching fees. The Executive may increase the scope of approved costs by motion.

First Aid Course Fees

- 1) All club members who take and pass a first aid course may, upon approval by Executive, be reimbursed \$50 towards the cost of the course, within the approved budget.

8.0 Financial Disbursements

- 1) The Treasurer can pay customary accounts/bills under \$200.00 without Executive approval.
- 2) Payments and reimbursements can be made by cheques or by electronic payment systems.
- 3) Any request to the Treasurer for reimbursement must be accompanied by a written receipt or invoice and expense claim form.
- 4) The signature of any two (2) officers is required on financial documents, other than cheques or electronic payments.