

**US Sailing
Community Sailing Center
Accreditation Program**



Guidelines & Application

INTRODUCTION

With hundreds of community sailing programs in the US Sailing database, the Community Sailing Center Accreditation 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 a national standard for community sailing programs. Accredited programs use US Sailing Certified Instructors in conjunction with US Sailing 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 organizations will be connected to other accredited Centers, receive communication from the US Sailing Community Sailing Committee, and will assist in mentoring 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 an organization 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, organizations are required to use curricula that follows a standard progression of skills based on the level of sailing being taught and the instructional methodologies found in US Sailing Instructor certification. The curricula should align with current US Sailing recommended skills (such as the Little Red Book, Skill Up and [Youth Development Model](#)).

Please note that US Sailing also accredits Keelboat Schools, Powerboat Training Centers, and Adaptive Sailing Centers in addition to Community Sailing Centers. Each accreditation process has different requirements, and programs apply for the accreditations separately.

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, appearance, and ideas. We are committed to achieving greater diversity throughout the sport and fostering an environment that is more inclusive. To help us achieve our mission, we seek to identify organizations that provide the highest quality of education and support access to sailing for all. These are organizations that align with the standards set forth by US Sailing and offer safety, fun and learning through their programming. Under the direction of the committee, US Sailing provides grants, accreditation, and resources to support the growth of Community Sailing.

Accredited organizations 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 organization differentiates itself from a sailing school in that it not only aims to provide high quality sailing education, but also aims to increase the diversity of the population that has access to sailing education and the sport itself.

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

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. Last year alone, US Sailing trained over 2,100 new instructors across the country in Small Boat, Keelboat, Powerboat and Reach instructor courses.

And 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 the use of national small boat sailing educational standards for instructional 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.
- Offer Instructor and Instructor Trainer certification as well as continuing education opportunities.

- Issue student and instructor certifications.
- Utilization of superior quality instructor manuals, student books and other teaching materials to support the program.
- Help sailing programs in their efforts to offer successful 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.

COMMUNITY SAILING ACCREDITATION PROGRAM MINIMUM REQUIREMENT GUIDELINES

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

1. Center must be a member organization of US Sailing in good standing and complete the enclosed application.
2. Center 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 Community Sailing. This includes continuing and specific programming, initiatives, or other direct action with the aim of increasing its participant/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 Community Sailing and the requirements of Accreditation. An applying Center should include documentation in its application that:
 - Acknowledges organizational leadership's understanding of Community Sailing's mission, application, and review process.
 - Authorizes the applying official to make the application with multiple leadership level signatures.
 - Provides a description of organizational leadership structure.
 - Confirms implementation of intentional organizational practices that:
 - Create greater diversity in organization's leadership or programming.
 - Identify and lower the barriers towards participation in sailing.
 - Reduce an organization's overall environmental impact and/or spurs increased environmental stewardship

In the case of 501c3 organizations, a board motion or similar official action may suffice. A Center board member and principal staff must sign and complete this US Sailing Community Sailing Center Accreditation application. If principal staff are seasonal, please indicate that in your application.

5. A Center acknowledges and agrees that it is 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 once 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 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.

6. Center is 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 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.
7. 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.
8. A Center must have a website with a clear process for members of the public to sign up for programming.
9. Fee Structure:
 - Annual sustaining-level organizational membership dues for US Sailing (\$225).
 - Annual Community Sailing Center Program Accreditation fee (\$200.00). 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.
 - 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.

Documentation

10. A Center 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. if they meet the same requirements and retain the same leadership. A Center must notify US Sailing of any change of ownership, changes to its legal business status, or dissolution.
11. Staff Certification Requirements:
 - All sailing classes must be directly supervised on the water by a US Sailing Certified Instructor actively afloat with each individual class.
 - 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.
 - A certified person must oversee classes on the water, but non-certified instructors can work with the class 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.
12. A Center 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 short 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 suitable for conducting classes.
 - A storm shelter.
 - Other entities nearby (yacht clubs, marinas, etc.) which cater to the boating public.
13. 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 from the Gowrie Group and should be modified for individual site conditions and risks.
 1. [Gowrie Jr. Sailing Safety Guide](#)
 2. [Club and Sailing Organization Safety Manual](#)
 3. [Emergency Card Template](#)
 - Liability waiver, incident report, 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.
14. The Organization’s 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.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

General Liability:

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
Disease – Policy Limit	\$500,000
Disease – Each Employee	\$500,000

A certificate of insurance from an insurer with a minimum best rating of A-Minus or better for minimum requirements above including:

- i. General Liability
- ii. Protection & Indemnity including Jones Act coverage
- iii. Including Jones Act coverage for crew (Sailing Instructors)
- iv. Workers Compensation Statutory limits
- v. \$500,000 Employer’s Liability
- vi. 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.

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.

Accreditation status may be suspended or revoked at any time.

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.

I. General Organization Information

Date: _____

Name of organization (*hereinafter referred to as "Center"*): _____

US Sailing Organizational member ID number: _____

Mailing address: _____

City, State & ZIP: _____

Physical address (if different than the mailing address):

General email address: _____

Website address: _____

Name and title of principal contact: _____

Name and title of person completing this form: _____

Position or relationship to the organization: _____

Principal contact telephone: _____

Principal contact email address: _____

II: Facilities & Equipment

- Please list all vessels/fleets you intend to use for sailing courses. Boats can be listed on a separate piece of paper entitled *Schedule A*. Use the format below for *Schedule A*. Include powerboats/safety boats and sailboats.

Sailboat(s)/Safety Boats	Fleet size	Length	Course Use

Please attach:

- 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. if they meet the same requirements and retain the same leadership. A Center must notify US Sailing of any change of ownership, changes to its legal business status, or dissolution.
- 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 short 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 suitable for conducting classes.
- A storm shelter.
- Other entities nearby (yacht clubs, marinas, etc.) which cater to the boating public.

III. Staff Information

Provide current US Sailing member ID numbers, staff names, and the level of instructor certification(s) on a separate piece of paper entitled *Schedule B*. If seasonal, 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.

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.

Schedule B format.

Instructor Name	Membership #	US Sailing Certifications	Classes taught

IV. Educational/Safety Documentation

Please include copies of the following:

- Emergency and Safety Procedure and Protocols.
 - Include an Emergency Action Plan, Emergency Card (with map), and site-specific Safety Manual. Examples provided below 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, 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.

V. Insurance and State/Federal Documents

Please include copies of the following:

- Copies of state business license and federal ID tax numbers.
- Insurance documentation. Certificate of Insurance, which complies with all required elements in *INSURANCE GUIDELINES* which states “Students are covered while aboard boats owned, chartered, or leased by the center.”
 - US Sailing is to be identified as an Additional Insured. A new Certificate of Insurance should be supplied to US Sailing at every renewal.

VI. Additional Required Information

Payment for the annual accreditation fee once the application is approved.

A principal of the Center must sign the following statement, acknowledging agreement to the terms, conditions and rules as found in the US Sailing Community Sailing Center Accreditation Guidelines and attesting to the veracity of the information enclosed in this application.

As principal of the Center, I agree to the terms, conditions and rules as found in the US Sailing Community Sailing Center Accreditation Guidelines and attesting to the veracity of the information enclosed in this application. By checking below I understand that submitting this application does not guarantee that the Center has been officially approved by US Sailing or their agent. Until the Center has been officially approved in writing from US Sailing, the Center will not imply verbally, or in any advertising and/or promotional items, that it is a US Sailing Accredited Community Sailing Center.

Print name _____ **Title** _____

Signed _____ **Date** _____

IMPORTANT: Submitting this application does not guarantee your Center has been officially approved by US Sailing or their agent. Until your Center has been officially approved in writing from US Sailing, you may not imply verbally or in any advertising and/or promotional items that your Center is a US Sailing Accredited Community Sailing Center.

SUBMIT APPLICATION [ONLINE](#) or TO: communitysailing@ussailing.org.