



Pennsylvania and New Jersey Boating Safety Education Frequently Asked Questions

1. If I have a certificate issued by the Coast Guard Auxiliary or the U.S. Power Squadrons for passing one of their boating courses, may I operate a PWC in Pennsylvania?

If you are a Pennsylvania resident, the answer is no. The only approved certificate for Pennsylvania residents is one issued by the Commission. Pennsylvania residents who have been issued a certificate for successfully completing a Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, or other course approved by the Executive Director, may be issued a Commission boating safety education certificate by contacting the Commission's office in Harrisburg (1-888-723-4741).

Non-residents may operate a PWC in Pennsylvania if they have a certificate issued by a state or province, or by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, U.S. Power Squadrons, or other organizations approved by National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA).

2. If I have a boating safety education certificate issued by another state, may I operate a personal watercraft (PWC) in Pennsylvania?

Yes, if the course was NASBLA approved. The Commission recognizes certificates issued by another state or province that have been approved by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA). Look for the NASBLA logo on your Boating Safety Education Certificate or [visit NASBLA's website](#) to see if the course you completed is NASBLA approved.



Approved permanent boating safety education certificates for Pennsylvania residents must be issued by the PA Fish and Boat Commission. Non-resident boaters must have a certificate issued for a course approved by NASBLA.

3. Does the New Jersey Boat Ed internet course meet the requirement for a Pennsylvania resident?

No. Approved permanent boating safety education certificates for Pennsylvania residents must be issued by the PA Fish & Boat Commission. The Pennsylvania Boat Ed or BoaterExam internet courses are NASBLA approved and meet state requirements nationwide.

Just a clarification, there are three online courses that have been approved in the State of New Jersey. They include the NJ State specific version of Boat-Ed, BoaterExam and American Boat Operator.

4. Does a New Jersey resident need a boat safety certificate to operate a boat in New Jersey?

Yes, operators of personal watercraft (Jet Ski, Wave Runner, etc.) or a power vessel on the waters of the State of New Jersey are required to possess a New Jersey boat safety certificate. A boat safety certificate is not required for non-powered vessels.

5. Does a Pennsylvania resident need a boating safety education certificate to boat in New Jersey?

Yes. Non-residents are not exempt from New Jersey's education requirements; however, New Jersey law states that a non-resident who is at least 16 years of age and who will be in New Jersey for less than 90 days may operate a power vessel on the waters of the State of New Jersey if they possess a boat safety certificate issued by their state of residence, or if they possess written proof of successful completion of a boat safety course approved by another state, the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) or the U. S. Coast Guard, or if they possess a New Jersey boat safety certificate.

Out-of-State residents who will be in New Jersey for more than 90 days will be required to possess a New Jersey boating safety certificate if they wish to operate a power vessel on the waters of the State of New Jersey.

6. May I operate a power vessel in New Jersey or Pennsylvania if I possess a current U. S. Coast Guard operator's license?

Yes, a person holding a current U. S. Coast Guard operator's (captain's) license who is otherwise required to possess a boating safety certificate, may operate a power vessel on the waters of the State of New Jersey or Commonwealth of Pennsylvania without having completed a boating safety course approved by the Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police or the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, provided that they have their operator's (captain's) license in their possession while operating.

The operator's license cannot be converted to a New Jersey or Pennsylvania boating safety certificate.

7. Will the State of New Jersey issue a certificate based on a state-issued certificate from Pennsylvania?

No. A New Jersey boating safety certificate will only be issued for successful completion of a boating safety course that has been approved by the Superintendent of State Police for the issuance of boating safety certificates, the application for which has been forwarded to the New Jersey State Police, on a New Jersey State Police application for boating safety certificate, by an approved boating safety instructor. Therefore, a New Jersey boating safety certificate cannot be issued based on a certificate issued by another state, or any other agency, or for any course that has not been specifically approved for the issuance of a New Jersey boating safety certificate.

8. Will the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission issue a boating safety education certificate based on a state-issued certificate from New Jersey?

Maybe. If the New Jersey boating safety education certificate indicates that the course was NASBLA approved or the applicant provides documentation that the course is NASBLA approved, the Commission will issue a Pennsylvania boating safety certificate. If there is no documentation to prove the course was NASBLA approved (Ex. NASBLA Logo) then a certificate cannot be issued.

9. How can a boater get a replacement New Jersey boating safety certificate?

Only New Jersey State issued boating safety certificates can be replaced by the Marine Services Bureau. Certificates issued by other states, the U. S. Coast Guard, the U. S. Power Squadrons, or any other agency cannot be re-issued by the Marine Services Bureau.

The preferred means of communication with the Marine Services Bureau regarding certificate replacement is via e-mail. E-mail requests should be sent to njboatcert@gw.njsp.org. Scanned copies of the below information must be in .jpg/.bmp format or in a Microsoft Word document. If it is not possible to e-mail your request you can request a replacement certificate by writing to:

NJSP BSC Replacement
BOX 7068
West Trenton, NJ 08628-0068

Requests may also be faxed to (609) 882-8110. Please be certain all of the information faxed is clearly legible.

Requests must include the following information:

1. Full legal name. In the case of a legal name change you must include your full legal name as it appeared on your original certificate as well as your current legal name and proof of name change (marriage certificate etc.).
2. Complete address. In the case of an address change you must include your address as it appeared on your original certificate as well as your current address.
3. Identification and proof of address (e.g., photocopy of drivers license, etc.).
4. Certificate number as it appears on your certificate (if known).
5. Home telephone with area code, daytime phone number with area code and an e-mail address.
6. Indicate the reason for requesting a replacement boating safety certificate (examples: Lost, Damaged, etc.).

10. How can a boater get a replacement Pennsylvania boating safety certificate?

Complete a *Duplicate Safety Certificate Application*, which is available online in PDF format at: <http://www.fishandboat.com/Boat/BoatingCourses/Documents/dupboatcert.pdf>. Follow the instructions on the form to submit it properly. The form should also be used to report a change of address.

11. What are (or where can I find) Pennsylvania's boating safety education requirements?

- All PWC (personal watercraft) operators, regardless of age, must have in their possession a Boating Safety Education Certificate.
 - Persons 11 years of age or younger may not operate PWC.
 - Persons 12 through 15 years of age may not operate a PWC with any passengers on board 15 years of age or younger, or rent a PWC.
- Persons born on or after January 1, 1982, operating boats powered by motors greater than 25 horsepower must have in their possession a Boating Safety Education Certificate.
 - Persons 11 years of age or younger may not operate boats powered by motors greater than 25 horsepower.

12. What are (or where can I find) New Jersey's boating safety education requirements?

The NJ Boating Safety Manual can be found on the NJSP, MSB website at <http://www.njsp.org/marine-services/index.shtml>, from there go to "Boat Safety Manual." Boating Safety Education Requirements are found on page 2 of the Boating Safety Manual. The direct link to the manual is http://www.state.nj.us/njsp/maritime/pdf/031413_boatsafetymanual.pdf and also can be found on the website in the "Boat Safety Certificate Info/Marine Services FAQ's" section.

- If you are operating a personal watercraft (Jet Ski, Wave Runner, etc.), or a power vessel on the waters of the State of New Jersey you are required to possess a boat safety certificate. A boat safety certificate is not required for non-powered vessels.
- Persons who are under 13 years of age are not permitted to operate a power vessel in the State of New Jersey.
- Persons who are at least 13 years old but who are less than 16 years old, and who possess a New Jersey boating safety certificate, are permitted to operate only vessels powered by electric trolling motors, or vessels 12' or longer with less than 10 total HP. New Jersey residents who possess a New Jersey boating safety certificate, and out-of-State residents who possess one or more of the documents specified in #5, above, for out-of-State operators, who are 16 years of age or older are permitted to operate all other power vessels including personal watercraft, on the waters of New Jersey.

For additional New Jersey boating safety requirements see the New Jersey State Police website at: <http://www.njsp.org/marine-services/index.shtml>

13. In New Jersey, do I need a boat license in addition to the boating safety education certificate?

A boat license is a separate document from a boat safety certificate and is required for operation on non-tidal water (water where the tide does not change) in the State of New Jersey. The boat license is not a replacement for a boat safety certificate; it is an additional requirement. On non-tidal waters in the State of New Jersey you may need both a boat safety certificate and a boat license. To obtain a boat license, go to your nearest NJ Motor Vehicle Commission Facility. Applicants must bring their NJ Boat Safety Certificate with them to apply for a boat license. A boat license is not required for non-powered vessels. Persons operating vessels less than 1 HP, vessels powered by 12-volt electric trolling motors or vessels 12 feet or longer with less than 10 total HP are exempt from the license requirement. Out-of-State residents who possess written proof of successful completion of a boat safety course that is substantially similar to an approved New Jersey boat safety course, are not required to possess a New Jersey boat operator's license when operating on non-tidal waters within the State of New Jersey.

[View Non-Tidal Boat Operator License Requirements \(PDF - 23kb\)](#)

14. In what circumstances will the PA Fish & Boat Commission return/reject my application for a Pennsylvania boating safety education certificate.

The Commission will return/reject any application that is incomplete, does not include the proper fee, does not provide documentation of the completed course being NASBLA approved, or does not state the type of course successfully completed.

To obtain a Pennsylvania boating safety education certificate the applicant must complete an approved course, or provide proof that the certificate previously issued is a NASBLA-approved

course by forwarding supporting documentation to the Commission. Please note that if you are not a Pennsylvania resident, you do not need to obtain a Pennsylvania boating safety certificate. All state-issued certificates are accepted as long as it states the holder has successfully completed a NASBLA-approved course. However, if you are a Pennsylvania resident, the only accepted certificate is a Pennsylvania boating safety education certificate.