



Last Revised : June 13 ,2020

## **Halton Outdoor Club: Paddling Community Covid -19 Guidelines for a Safe Club Paddle**

As a responsible volunteer-run organization, the Halton Outdoor Club has developed safety guidelines to protect participants and Trip Leaders during the Covid-19 pandemic. Trip Leaders need to be comfortable leading a Club paddle or trip and in order to ensure group safety, we ask that you follow outlined below guidelines. Completing a wet exit, self and assisted rescue is required within the last 12 months. These criteria will be necessary to join us on a day paddle or trip.

In order to paddle with the Halton Outdoor Club at this time , we have created guidelines based on the Ministry of Health Ontario Covid-19 Guidance.

Note:

- Start of the HOC Club paddle or trip is at launch site, finish is at landing site.
- Trip Leader has the discretion to deny trip paddler based on skill level, equipment or not respecting Covid-19 protocol at all times.
- You will be asked to fill in a wavier at time of registration.
- You will be asked at launch site to make verbal declaration based on Ontario Ministry of Health Covid -19 questionnaire.
- During Covid-19 restrictions self-rescues practise will be emphasized.

Guidelines: Please follow Ontario Ministry of Health guidelines

- Practise physical distancing of 2m apart both on land and on water.
- Frequent hand washing or, when not available use of alcohol based hand sanitizer.
- Use of mask if unable to maintain physical distancing of 2m apart.
- If assistance is required to unload and load maintain physical distancing.
- Per Trip Leader to Paddler ratio : 1:6 = group of 6 max ( includes TL).
- If more than one group is paddling, use staggered launch times no less than one hour apart.

Best Practises: Please follow Ontario Ministry of Health guidelines

- Do not recommend car pooling tent sharing , food sharing, group meal cooking
- Clean and disinfect cooking surfaces and wash own utensils.

Question and Answer: Think safety for everyone. Common sense prevails. Be patient.

- What is the maximum group size per Trip Leader
  - Maximum of 6 including the Trip Leader
  
- Can we have more than one group during a paddle?
  - Yes, as long as we maintain the group size no more than 6 (inc Trip Leader) .
  - Yes, as long as we maintain separation between the groups with staggered paddle time of one hour post first group launch.
  - Yes, we will set up designation areas for separation purposes to prepare for paddle.
  
- How do I complete my wet exit and rescues to enable me to join Club paddles?
  - All Club paddlers are required to have completed a wet exit, self and assisted rescue within the last 12 months before joining a paddle.
  - During Covid-19 restrictions, self-rescue practise will be emphasized.
  - There will be more details available on how to safely rescue.
  - Halton Outdoor Club paddling community will share a youtube video on our website to demonstrate what is suggested as a safe assisted rescue.
  
- When can I start to paddle with the club?
  - The events calendar will be updated based on Day Trip Leader interest to lead day paddles in a safe manner .
  - The events calendar will be updated based on Car Camping Trip Leaders and campgrounds opening for tent camping, inclusive of access to a boat launch or beach areas.
  - The events calendar will be updated based on Wilderness Trip Leaders and access to Crown Land camping.
  
- How do I safely conduct a self-rescue, in lieu of assisted being difficult while social distancing?
  - We strongly emphasize to practise and use your self rescue skills as primary method of rescue .
  - Please practise and be prepared to rescue yourself before seeking assistance.
  
- How do I safely conduct an assisted rescue while maintaining physical distancing?
  - Halton Outdoor Club paddling community will share a youtube video on our website to demonstrate what is suggested as a safe assisted rescue.
  - Refer to Paddle Canada youtube video as reference.
  
- How will I find out when Club Paddles begin to open up?
  - Keep checking the HOC website events calendar as trips may be posted as more information becomes available.
  
- If we do not get in our wet exit, assisted and self-rescue, will we be denied the chance to go on an overnight trip? Will we be denied the chance to go on a day trip?

- Our goal is to ensure group safety therefore before we go on a trip. Please practise before or, if the trip leader schedules some time before paddle we can practise before we begin the paddle.
- The Trip Leader may request you to complete a wet exit, self , assister rescue if you have not completed one in the last 12 months. For the safety of the group we encourage you practise before joining a paddle or trip.
- We will attempt to pair paddlers together as potential rescue partners while on a paddle or trip.
  
- Will all people, even leaders, be required to complete a wet exit, assisted and self-rescue?
  - Yes, all members including leaders will need to complete their wet exit and rescue skills.
  
- Would help be available to get my kayak on/off my vehicle?
  - You will be able to ask for unload/load assistance ensuring physical distancing of 2 metres. In situations where physical distancing is not feasible both parties will be required to wear a face covering over the mouth and nose.
  
- Do I need to wear a mask while I paddle?
  - Please bring your mask or PPE ( Buff) if you are not able to maintain 2m physical distancing on land or on the water.