



## Vero Beach Rowing Member Handbook

Toffey Rowing Center  
310 Acacia Road  
Vero Beach, FL 32963  
(772) 261-0747  
[www.verobeachrowing.org](http://www.verobeachrowing.org)

### Annual Membership Renewal Dates:

April 15th or October 15th

### Winter Membership Dates:

October 15th - April 15th

### Student/ U26 Membership Dates:

Annual: April 15th or October 15th  
Summer: June 1st - August 31st  
Holiday: Thanksgiving week - January 15th

### People to know:

Director of Rowing	Dan Schenk	<a href="mailto:dan.schenk@verobeachrowing.org">dan.schenk@verobeachrowing.org</a>
Lead Masters Coach	Mack Hiden	<a href="mailto:mack.hiden@verobeachrowing.org">mack.hiden@verobeachrowing.org</a>
Bookkeeper	Alex Brewster	<a href="mailto:accounts@verobeachrowing.org">accounts@verobeachrowing.org</a>
President	Jimmy Michael	<a href="mailto:president@verobeachrowing.org">president@verobeachrowing.org</a>

### Practice Times:

Foundation	Tues/Thurs/Sun: 7:30-9am
Performance	Tues/Thurs: 5:45-7:15am
Summer Evening	(June-July) Wed: 6-7:30pm
Masters Conditioning	(August-May) Wed: 7:30-9am

## Welcome to Vero Beach Rowing

Vero Beach Rowing is thrilled to welcome you! We are on a mission to promote and teach the sport of rowing to the community in order to develop physical fitness, personal character, and an ethic of cooperation through competitive and recreational opportunities. As we look forward to safe and meaningful seasons of rowing and racing, we're providing this Member Handbook to serve as a standard and expectation of behavior reflective of our organization's values and ethics.

## Membership, Dues, and Fees

Membership dues and fees are paid to Vero Beach Rowing and are used to meet the operational needs of the organization and its members. The dues and fees schedule is established by the VBR Board of Directors and reviewed on an annual basis.

### Membership Classes

Vero Beach Rowing has the following membership classes.

1. Annual Membership
2. Seasonal Membership
3. Associate Membership
4. Parent/Guardian Membership
5. Student/U26
6. Family Membership

In addition to membership dues, members may be responsible for additional fees related to boat storage, regattas, and additional programming. Membership dues and initial fees are to be paid in advance through Boathouse Connect. There are two renewal periods each year, April 15th and October 15th. Specific program fees are due at the time of the program.

### Volunteer Service Requirement

VBR requires all annual members to volunteer twelve (12) hours per year, pro-rated to the date of membership to the organization. All hours must be logged in Boathouse Connect.

We rely on volunteers to run many parts of our organization. Volunteer opportunities include helping at community events, joining a VBR committee, and contributing to the general maintenance of the facilities and equipment. Volunteers help to maintain a dues structure which allows rowing to be financially feasible to a larger number of the public. To learn about available volunteer opportunities, please contact [volunteers@verobeachrowing.org](mailto:volunteers@verobeachrowing.org).

### Private Boat and Oar Storage

VBR members in good standing are eligible to store private boats at the boathouse for an additional fee. Rack space is offered in the boathouse and in the boat yard. If the demand for boat storage exceeds the available space, members may apply to have their equipment added to the waiting list. The list is prioritized as follows:

1. VBR owned equipment
2. Members with an existing boat waiting for a preferred location
3. Members who want a rack for a new boat
4. Non-members who wish to join and pay a storage fee.

Stored boats not consistently used may be moved to a less desirable rack to make room for those boats that are active. Boat owner will be notified their equipment is being moved and the new location. Rack space rental includes only the rack on which a personal shell rests. Private boat slings must be clearly labeled and can be stored in the vicinity of the rack. Personal property may not be stored on the ground between racks or in any other areas of the boathouse. Racks with names on them are reserved for those named.

Private oars can be stored in the boathouse. At this time there is no additional fee to store private oars. Private oars and the corresponding rack location are to be labeled with the members name responsible for the oars. Oars not labeled may be removed from the boathouse at the discretion of the Operations Committee. Shoes may also be stored with private oars.

As with any personal property items left at the boathouse, such items are left at the owner's risk. VBR is not responsible for these items. It is the sole responsibility of the owner to maintain appropriate insurance coverage for all stored personal items.

#### Delinquency

To remain in good standing, a member must pay all applicable dues, fees, and assessments, whether or not the member actually uses or intends to use the club facilities or equipment. All fees are to be paid through Boathouse Connect.

Members who have not maintained their payment of dues, fees, or assessments are considered delinquent. Their names may be posted in the boathouse. Delinquent members may, at the discretion of the VBR Board, be denied use of the facilities and equipment until all dues, fees, and assessments are brought current.

#### Communication

Communication is a vital part of any organization. All official communication between the organization and the membership will be sent via email through Boathouse Connect. This communication is archived on Boathouse Connect and can be referenced for future use.

VBR uses WhatsApp as a supplemental form of communication. All members are able to join the VBR WhatsApp Community. The community serves all aspects of the organization through Announcements and Groups.

- Announcements - VBR administrators are able to post announcements to all members through the Announcements tab in WhatsApp. This will be a supplement to any official communication posted through Boathouse Connect. Any information posted in Announcements will ALSO be sent out via e-mail through Boathouse Connect.
- VBR Masters Group - All members are able to join the VBR Masters group. This allows for information communication and "chat" between members. No official communication will be sent through the VBR Masters group, but reminders will be sent.
- Additional Groups - Additional groups can be hosted in the WhatsApp Community. The staff, youth team and parents also have groups. At this time there is only ONE masters group, but there may be reasons to create subgroups for specific regattas, events or programming.

If members need to get in touch with a coach, they are encouraged to contact them via email or through a direct WhatsApp message. E-mail addresses for the coaches and staff are included on the cover of this handbook. It is recommended a WhatsApp message is used for time sensitive communication with a coach. This would include notifying the coach of a last minute change to practice attendance.

Boathouse Connect and WhatsApp are great communication tools for our organization. Please be mindful when commenting on chats. Coaches and members can view all comments made. Please keep our communication space positive.

Social media is frequently used by all of our members. All official club social media accounts will be run from within the organization and managed by employees and/or assigned volunteers. Members are not permitted to manage social media accounts which may be perceived by the public as official. Social media may not be used to put VBR in a negative light or to harass members. Please contact the Communications Committee if you would like to be involved in the social media footprint of our organization.

### Registration

Members are asked to provide the following information as part of their annual registration:

- VBR Liability Waiver
- USRowing Membership
- Handbook Attestation
- USRowing Safety Video Attestation
- Swim Attestation
- Photo Release
- Boat Storage Rental Agreement (if applicable)

### Guest Rowers

A Guest Rower has been invited to row by a current member of the program.

- For all rows, guest rowers must be approved by the Head Coach
- Members and guests will use facilities at their own risk
- Guests must complete a VBR Release of Liability Form, USRowing Waiver, and Swim Attestation prior to using VBR equipment
- Guests may only use club equipment with prior approval from club coaching staff, and must be accompanied by the sponsoring member at all times, both on and off of the water.

### Visiting Rowers

A visiting rower is an experienced rower who is interested in a short-term membership. After the required coach skills assessment and waterway orientation, Visiting Rowers will have access to club equipment and facilities.

- Visiting Rowers can purchase a month membership. This membership may only be used once in a 12-month period.
- Visiting Rowers must adhere to all program policies and procedures, as defined in this handbook.

## Facilities and Grounds

### Facilities Users' Requirements

All users of Vero Beach Rowing facilities and equipment must be:

- Members in good standing of Vero Beach Rowing or participants in a VBR Program
- Members of crew and individuals visiting VBR
- Invited guest of a VBR member

### Facilities Users' Responsibilities

All users of Vero Beach Rowing facilities and equipment understand and accept the following terms:

- Members and guests will use facilities at their own risk.
- VBR is not responsible for the loss of personal property or valuables from the facilities
- Private boats and oars may be stored in the boathouse, please see Private Boats and Oars under the Membership section for additional information.
- As with any personal property items left at the boathouse, such items are left at the owner's risk. VBR is not responsible for these items. It is the sole responsibility of the owner to maintain appropriate insurance coverage for all stored personal items.

### Facilities Access and Security

The boathouse is accessible to members in good standing from 5am to 9pm each day. Members in "good standing" are those whose membership has been accepted and who are not in arrears in their dues, fees, or other assessments. To preserve the security of the boathouse and equipment, it is important that you do not share access fobs. When you leave the boathouse or are out on the water, if no one remains at the boathouse make sure all doors are closed and locked. Make certain all equipment (hoses, boat slings, oar racks, etc) has been placed inside the boathouse if you are the last one to leave the building and no one else is on the water. Both gates to the boatyard are to remain locked when not in use or while on the water.

VBR uses the SALTO Access Control system. Key Fobs can be assigned to the Board of Directors, staff, and private boat owners. The Executive Director has authority to assign additional FOBs at their discretion. There is a \$30 fee for the Key Fob. If a member would like to apply for a Key Fob they are to email their request to [accounts@verobeachrowing.org](mailto:accounts@verobeachrowing.org) with a description of why they need a Key Fob. The \$30 fee will be assessed for any lost key fobs.

### Gym and Equipment Use

Members are allowed to use the gym during boathouse hours as long as it does not interfere with scheduled programming or special events.

Ergometers are available for use by all club members. Clean the wheels and slide after each use with a soft rag and cleaner provided in the gym. Wipe down the erg handle and seat. When not in use, leave the erg handle in the fully retracted position against the flywheel assembly. Ergometer should be stored upright on end, with the monitor arm folded back.

All weights should be replaced on the respective weight rack.

Any problems with ergometer or other equipment should be reported using an equipment repair request.

### Locker Room Usage

Vero Beach Rowing offers both youth and adult programming. Please avoid loitering in the restrooms and locker rooms, especially during a youth practice. Daily use of locks on the lockers is permitted. Locks may not be left on lockers overnight.

All dressing/showering must take place behind closed stall doors. Nakedness, total or partial, in the locker rooms is prohibited.

### Drugs, Tobacco/ Vaping, and Alcohol

Smoking, vaping, or the use of non-prescribed illicit drugs is prohibited at Vero Beach Rowing or while representing the organization. Alcohol use is not permitted on the property without prior permission of the VBR Board of Directors. VBR's lease with the city places limits on alcohol use. A permit to serve/offer alcohol will be requested from the City of Vero Beach for an event including alcohol.

Anyone appearing to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be allowed on the property.

### Dogs

Dogs, with the exception of service animals, are not allowed in the boathouse without written approval from the VBR Board. Dogs that are allowed must not be allowed to roam freely in the building. Dogs are not allowed to roam freely on the grounds during periods when boats are being used as it is a hazard to crews carrying equipment. If your pet leaves any waste, clean it up immediately.

## Programs

Vero Beach Rowing offers a variety of programs to members of all ages and abilities. We are continually working to refine and expand programming to better serve the needs of the membership. Below is a list of the current programming offered to members.

### Sunday Row

Practice Sessions: Sunday (Year Round) - 7:30 AM to 9:00 AM

### Technique and Transition Row

Practice Sessions: Monday/Friday (Year Round) - 7:30 AM to 9:00 AM

Technique and Transition is designed to help members hone specific technical skills and to prepare new rowers (recent Learn-to-Row grads) for the Foundation Practice.

### Foundation Row

Practice Sessions: Tuesday/Thursday (Year Round) - 7:30 AM to 9:00 AM

The Foundation Program is designed for all members to learn foundational skills in sculling and sweeping. Coaching will be focused on the development of basic skills and safety. All skills needed for Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Bow Qualifications can be learned in the Foundation Practice.

### Performance Row

Practice Sessions: Tuesday/Thursday (Year Round) - 5:45 AM to 7:15 AM

The Performance Practice is designed for adult members who have mastered the basic foundational skills in sculling. Coaching will be focused on higher level skills and performance. Skills needed for Level 1, Level 2, Level 3, and Bow Qualifications may be refined, but will not be taught, at the Performance Practice.

### Conditioning

Practice Sessions: Wednesday (September - May) - 7:30 AM to 9 AM

The Conditioning practices are designed to promote strength and fitness through resistance training. Practices are led by a coach and are open to all adult members. Safety and technique are prioritized. If a participant has a physical limitation that negatively impacts their ability to complete an exercise, the coach and participant will work together to find an alternative exercise. All members must attend with close-toed shoes.

VBR also provides youth programming, Learn-To-Row opportunities, and community outreach. These programs are important to the overall mission of the organization and impacts our members in direct and indirect ways. The coaching and staff also spend a great amount of time planning and running these programs.

### Participant Expectations:

Rowing is a team activity and we work hard to provide a consistent experience for all members. The following guidelines should be followed:

- All attendance for coached sessions must be submitted via Boathouse Connect by 6pm the evening before the practice. Lineups will be posted on Boathouse Connect before the start of practice.
- If a member has signed up for a practice and is unable to attend or will arrive late, it is imperative the member informs the coach via a WhatsApp message. Do not communicate an absence or tardiness via Boathouse Connect. It is also a good idea to notify the others in your boat. Please be aware that one person not arriving after having committed to row has a potential ripple effect on many of your teammates.
- All athletes are expected to arrive at least 15 minutes early to prepare their equipment prior to the practice start time.
- The coach will review the planned workout and any additional notes at the start of practice. In the event of poor weather/rowing conditions, the practice will be moved indoors.
- All participants must be prepared to row or cox in any boat. Sweep rowing lineups may be assigned based on equipment needs.
- There are times when practices need to be canceled. Any schedule changes will be announced via Boathouse Connect. Canceled practices will be announced via BHC, and will be subject to Unsupervised/Open Row policies.
- Any request for lineups must be made to the coach via direct WhatsApp message between 4-6pm the day before practice. Requested lineups are not guaranteed.

### Coach Communication and Feedback

Our coached sessions are formatted to create a safe and constructive environment for all members. The coach needs to consider many factors when setting lineups and preparing for practice, member safety being most important.

All members are encouraged to review their rowing goals with the Lead Masters Coach. Initial concerns regarding safety, lineups, and training plans should be brought up with the Lead Masters Coach. For concerns regarding the conduct of coaches and/or safety of athletes, a grievance report may be filed. We encourage athletes to discuss the incident with the responsible coach first, when appropriate.

Members are sent a survey at the end of each practice through Boathouse Connect. This is a great tool to provide feedback to the coaches and we encourage members to use it. Please know practice comments are visible to all coaches.

### Injury

Please report all injuries incurred during a Coached Session to a coach immediately so that we are able to get you appropriate treatment as quickly as possible and create an appropriate incident report. For all injuries which occur on VBR property outside of Coached Sessions, members are required to fill out an incident report through the VBR website.

### Regattas

The masters program has the opportunity to participate in regattas throughout the year. There is typically one each season. The following guidelines apply to each regatta:

- Members are responsible for their personal travel & accommodations for regattas.
- Members are expected to remain at the venue throughout the entire regatta unless special arrangements have been made with staff in writing prior to the regatta.
- No competing member should leave a regatta until the boat trailer loading has been completed & coaches dismiss the team.
- Members are asked to not contact Regatta Directors directly. Questions regarding regattas should go through the VBR coaching staff.

- Once the sign-up deadline has passed, all members registered for the regatta are responsible for payment of regatta fees and attendance at the regatta. Regatta fees cover entry fees, transportation of equipment, and coaching expenses.
- Failure to meet the above expectations may affect a member's participation in future regattas.

## Use of Club Equipment

Members are permitted to use club equipment at any time as long as the use does not impact scheduled programming and the appropriate procedures and safety policies are followed. VBR has established an approval process to show proficiency in use of equipment. This is for the safety of the members and to ensure proper use of the equipment

There is a Level 1, 2, and 3 Qualification which indicates specific proficiency related to sculling. Additionally, there is a Quad Bow Certification which is needed to bow quads. The following outlines each certification/qualification:

Level 1 Qualified rowers are able to:

- Reserve singles with the use of pontoons.
- Row a double with a Level 2 qualified rower. The Bow Seat of the double must be Level 2 qualified.
- Row a quad. The bow seat of the quad must reserve the boat and be Quad Bow certified.
- Level 1 Rowers will always have a partner while on the water.

The Level 1 skills assessment is performed rowing a single with pontoons.

Level 2 Qualified rowers are able to:

- Reserve singles without pontoons and row with another Level 2 qualified rower.
- Reserve a double. The Bow Seat of the double must be Level 2 qualified.
- Row a quad. The bow seat of the quad must reserve the boat and be Quad Bow certified.
- Level 2 Rowers will always have a partner while on the water.

The Level 2 skills assessment is performed rowing a single without pontoons.

Level 3 Qualified rowers are able to:

- Reserve singles without pontoons and row with no partner.
- Reserve a double. The Bow Seat of the double must be Level 2 qualified.
- Row a quad. The bow seat of the quad must reserve the boat and be Quad Bow certified.

The Level 3 skills assessment is performed rowing a single without pontoons and includes a flip test.

Quad Bow certified rowers are able to demonstrate proficiency bowing a quad. They are able to reserve a quad. The bow seat of the quad must reserve the boat and be Quad Bow certified.

The following table demonstrates the required areas of proficiency.

	Level 1 Single w/ Pontoon	Level 2 Single w/out Pontoon	Level 3	Quad Bow Certification
Carrying single with a partner	X	X		
Setting pontoons properly	X			
Carrying single without assistance			X	
Instructing a crew in carrying equipment				X
Adjusting foot stretchers off the dock	X	X	X	
Turning 360 degrees port to starboard and starboard to port	X	X	X	
Commanding a 360 degree port to starboard and starboard to port spin of a quad				X
Completing a loop from the dock, around Fritz island, and back in under 60 minutes	X	X	X	
Safely navigating a quad with toe-steering on the East side and West side of the ICW without incident				X
Docking a single on the portside and on starboard side	X	X	X	
Docking a quad on the portside and on the starboard side				X
Getting equipment off the dock in under 3 minutes	X	X	X	X
Properly caring for and returning equipment after a row.	X	X	X	X
Flip Test*			X	

\*The flip test requires demonstrating the ability to get back into a single after capsizing. Rowers are given 3 attempts. After the 3rd attempt, rowers are given the option to swim the boat to shallow water to attempt a "wet launch."

### Earning Qualification/Certification

The skills necessary to earn a Level 1, 2, and 3 Qualification and Bow Quad Certification can be learned through regular attendance at Foundation practices, or through Private Lessons. Members interested in pursuing the qualifications/certifications should notify the Lead Masters Coach of their intent. The Lead Masters Coach will consider this when setting practice lineups.

Once a month, the Lead Masters Coach will run a session where rowers can demonstrate proficiency in the specific areas.

### Retaining Qualification/Certification

Qualification and Certification levels will be evaluated on an annual basis, corresponding with membership renewals. Proximate to October 15th and April 15th, the coaching staff will meet to review each renewed member and their corresponding qualification/certification levels. The coaches are consistently aware of members' use of equipment and proficiency. They are in a position to renew qualification/certifications for the corresponding membership period. If the coaches have concerns about the rowers' proficiency they will reach out to the rower for a discussion. They may determine it is appropriate for the rower to demonstrate proficiency in specific areas before the qualification/certification can be renewed. All members will be notified following the review process if their status has changed.

The coaching staff reserves the right to change a members qualification/certification level if there is concern of the members safety. Any changes in status will be clearly communicated to the member in writing.

### Reserving and Using Club Equipment

Members must reserve equipment through Boathouse Connect prior to rowing. Boathouse Connect will only allow members to reserve equipment they are qualified/certified. The bow rower **MUST** be the one to reserve the equipment. Equipment may not be reserved or used during any scheduled practice.

### Equipment Access/ Usage Rules

- Coached programs will have priority access to equipment.
- For uncoached rows, members may only use equipment identified for their certification/qualification.
- All coxed boats will be rowed with a proficient coxswain as reviewed by Lead Coach or Head Coach.
- Members may request to use VBR equipment for regattas the masters program is not officially attending. Any member(s) wishing to use VBR equipment for racing must email the Program Manager prior to the race date, recommended to be minimum three weeks prior. The boat/equipment may not be removed from the boathouse without approval of the request by the Program Manager.
- Members shall inspect equipment before and after each use. Any damaged or questionable condition equipment may not be used. Equipment Repair requests can be made on Boathouse Connect or in the post-practice survey. There is also a repair form on the VBR Website - <https://www.verobeachrowing.org/repair/>.

### Attire, Cell Phones, and Water

- Rowers are encouraged to wear bright colored shirts to increase visibility while rowing.
- Members must always wear shirts while on land.
- Shoes must be worn while carrying equipment to and from the dock. Close-toed shoes must be worn for any weight lifting sessions.
- Hats/Visors and sunglasses are highly recommended to reduce eye strain and cumulative damage.
- Rowers are encouraged to have a cell phone with them in a dry bag when rowing in order to call 911 if an emergency arises and medical help is required.
- Rowers are encouraged to bring water in the boat and drink often when rowing in warm weather.
- Members are strongly encouraged to use re-usable water bottles. The material used in many water bottles can damage the rowing shells, please place the water bottle in a sock or place other soft padding around them to prevent scraping boat cockpits and causing equipment damage. The use of disposable bottles should be minimized.

### Boat Handling and Check Out

- For all uncoached rows, the Bow seat MUST sign the crew in and out of the logbook before use of equipment. The logbook is located next to the boat bays. Rowers may only use equipment they are qualified/certified to use.
- Check that slings are stable and avoid allowing hull or riggers to touch anything
- Before launching, check that the oar blades and tips have no splits or cracks, sliding seats move freely on tracks, foot stretchers are firmly attached on both sides and in the middle, and heel ties are tied down.
- Coxswains/bow persons are responsible for proper and safe handling to/from water. Coxswains/bow should position themselves "following" the boat, holding the bow or stern, to coach rowers safely and so that their voice can be heard.

### Dock launching/landing

- Launching boats have the right of way; 90 second rule suggested during congested times. Push away from the dock as soon as possible when crews are waiting.
- When launching, waiting crews should wait in the boatyard or on the esplanade, not the street, if immediate launch space is not available.
- Any coached row session has priority for launching.
- When returning to the dock, if there is no dock space, wait in the approach section of the lagoon.
- Upon return to dock, when crews are waiting, "walk" your boat down to the east end of the dock, exit as soon as possible, 90 second rule suggested during congested times.

### On the Water

- Avoid hitting anything (river bottom, river signs, markers, pilings, buoys, shore, floating debris) or any other boat
- Rowing inside the Intercoastal Waterway (ICW) Main Channel (between the channel markers) is prohibited, except to cross through while enroute to the dock and acceptable rowing area along the shoreline. If conditions require crossing the ICW, cross at a sharp angle and yield right of way to any boats traveling in the channel.
- Members must follow all safety and weather policies, regardless of private or club equipment.
- As bow, look over both shoulders frequently enough to avoid any hazards, or use a mirror.
- When passing another boat moving in the opposite direction and on a collision or near-collision course while on the river and out of the channel, passing should be port to port. (Follow the "Rules of Navigation")

### Equipment/Facilities Care

- All equipment should be rinsed, soaped, rinsed again, and dried before returning equipment to its storage location. Please be sure to move the seats while spraying the wheels. Corroded wheel bearings are one of our biggest maintenance items. Ensure oar locks are closed before storing the boat. Empty water buckets and turn upside down, and return sponges to the drying rack.
- All boats must have a bow ball affixed.
- All trash, recycle material must be picked up around the property and the dock and placed in appropriate receptacles.
- All clothing must be picked up and stored in a designated location at the back of Bay 3.
- Members are responsible for ensuring that all equipment is stored in the appropriate location and the facility is securely locked prior to leaving.

## **Safety and Security**

The protection of personal health and well being is of primary importance. Members shall assume responsibility for their own safety while on the water. Equipment should only be used for its intended purpose, and site users should always strive to protect equipment from damage and neglect. It is the responsibility of every site user and coach to assess all conditions, including, but not limited to weather, water conditions, and lightning conditions.

All occurrences of personal injury, property or equipment damage, however slight, must be reported immediately in an Incident Report (found on the VBR website). This includes privately owned equipment. Damaged equipment must be placed in Bay 4.

### **Safety Launches**

- All launches will operate in accordance with applicable safety regulations.
- All gasoline storage will be in a secure, approved storage area and will use approved, flame proof containers.

### **AED and First Aid Kits**

- First Aid kits can be found upstairs near the conference room and downstairs by the logbook.
- All launches must be equipped with their assigned First Aid kit (stored in the outdoor shed).
- If any supplies are used from a First Aid Kit, please fill out an Incident report on the VBR website (<https://www.verobeachrowing.org/incident-report/>).
- An AED is located in the boat bays by the logbook.

### **Safety Orientation**

- Members should be aware of rescue procedures in the water, recognition of unsafe water conditions, basic first aid, proper navigation rules and boat handling, and rowing terminology.
- Experienced rowers new to VBR need to receive safety overview and ICW familiarization training before rowing.
- All members are required to watch the [USRrowing Safety Video](#).

### **Safety and Weather Guidelines**

All members are required to adhere to the following Safety Policies. Failure to adhere to the policies may result in suspension of rowing privileges. All members are encouraged to pass the free online Boating Safety course for Florida, found at <http://www.boatus.org/free/>

### **Boat Lights**

- All boats on the water before sunrise and after sunset must have working bow and stern lights. Bow lights must be mounted on the bow of the boat with red (port side) and green (starboard side) lighting. Stern lights must be mounted on the stern of the boat or on the stroke person with a white light.
- All private boat owners are responsible for outfitting their own boats.

### **Lightning**

- Rowing while lightning strikes have been detected within 15 miles of the boathouse within the past 30 minutes is PROHIBITED.
- Before rowing, check the local radar. If poor weather is moving towards the boathouse, DO NOT LAUNCH if it will arrive during your practice time.

### Wind

- USRowing and Vero Beach Rowing recommends extreme caution when rowing in high winds.
- DO NOT ROW if wind is over 12 mph from the North/South without a safety launch.
- If sudden winds come up, return to the boathouse if the trip is safe, or take the boat to the nearest shore and wait for the winds to calm down.

### Fog

- DO NOT ROW in fog with less than 150 yards visibility. As a point of measure, the distance from the dock to the entrance of the boat basin is 150 yards. If you cannot see the bridge from the dock, do not row.
- If fog sets in while you are on the water, move slowly, and be prepared to stop quickly. Use a sound making device (cox box, horn, or whistle) to advise other boats of your location as you take your boat to shore, following the shore back to the boathouse.

### Temperature

- DO NOT ROW without a safety launch when the air is below 50 degrees.
- Plan activity level consistent with the degree of heat and humidity. Heat stroke is life threatening. Symptoms may include confusion, behavior changes, nausea, muscle cramps, and dizziness. Seek medical help immediately for rowers with symptoms. Always take water in the boat and drink often when rowing in warm weather.

## Member Code of Conduct

As an organization in good standing with USRowing, we require all members, their family members and guests, and visiting rowers to hold themselves to a consistent standard of decency, excellence, and commitment. Each person is responsible to act in accordance with the VBR Code of Conduct and treat each person with respect and courtesy, regardless of their tenure or abilities. Behavior at VBR facilities, regattas, and in public reflect on the reputation of the organization in Indian River County and the larger rowing community.

Each member is responsible for their actions, and we are all responsible for knowing and abiding by the policies that apply to us. Board Members and the Executive Director have a special responsibility, through example and communication, to ensure the membership and staff understand and comply with the Code and other relevant policies. Coaches have a similar responsibility for the athletes/members under their direction.

The Code of Conduct serves as a reference for decisions in a variety of circumstances. No rulebook can anticipate every situation.

- The Code applies to all members, managers, coaches, and employees of Vero Beach Rowing.
- You are required to comply with the terms of the Code of Conduct as a condition of your continued membership or employment at Vero Beach Rowing.
- If you violate the Code, you may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of membership or employment.
- Vero Beach Rowing prohibits retaliation of any kind against members or employees who have made good faith reports of violations of the Code of Conduct.
- Report violations through the grievance process or directly to the Executive Director or any member of the Board of Directors.
- You should be aware of and follow SafeSport guidelines.
- Harassment or Bullying will not be tolerated. This includes but is not limited to rude comments from one member to another; rumor-milling, gossiping, or negative comments about teammates, coaches, volunteers, workouts, or results. This standard applies to all forms of communications including personal contact, e-mails, and social media. Use age and situation appropriate content and tone in conversations.
- Social media or other forward facing, public representation of our organization or members shall not be used to put VBR or its members in a negative light.
- Consistently and deliberately creating conflict and discord within the organization will not be tolerated.
- VBR roster or assets cannot be used for personal business or for activities which conflict with the interests of VBR.

### Enforcement and Discipline

VBR is a membership organization run on the basis of trust and individual responsibility for one's actions. Failure to follow the VBR Code of Conduct, Safety, and other VBR policies and rules can be grounds for discipline including suspension of member's privileges, forfeiture of rack space, or expulsion from Membership in VBR.

Depending on the severity of an infraction, the organization has a variety of disciplinary actions. Each case will be treated individually. In general however, management will follow a progressive system ranging from warnings to termination. VBR may issue numerous verbal warnings that will not

initiate progressive discipline. If progressive discipline is required the following sequence will generally be followed:

- First, a verbal warning, combined with written documentation.
- Second, a conversation including the Executive Director and/or Membership Chairperson with additional written documentation. Written documentation will be signed to verify acknowledgment.
- Third, an official write up and conversation with a member of the Board of Directors, followed by a suspension from privileges for a specified period. A Member will not be eligible for a refund corresponding to the suspension period.

#### Liability for Use of Boats and Equipment

Vero Beach Rowing accounts for normal wear and tear of the equipment. The organization also maintains insurance for equipment damage. Damage of equipment due to negligence shall be the responsibility of the person or persons using the equipment at the time the damage occurs. The responsibility includes the handling of boats and equipment in the boathouse, on the water, during transportation to and from regattas and events, and regarding any other functions for which boats, oars, or equipment are used. The Board of Directors may, at their discretion, assess the cost of damage to those persons determined responsible for the damage. If the Board of Directors decides to make an insurance claim, the person shall be responsible for only the cost of the insurance deductible.

## Member Reporting

### Post Practice Survey and Equipment Repair Request

Boathouse Connect sends a post practice survey to each participant. This is an opportunity for members to provide feedback on the practice and coaching. Members can also report any damage to equipment on Boathouse Connect or fill out the equipment repair request form on the VBR Website - <https://www.verobeachrowing.org/repair/>.

### Incident Reports

The incident policy and procedure intends to document safety incidents that occur at Vero Beach Rowing and to determine follow up action to maintain a high safety level for all Vero Beach Rowing participants.

An incident report may be filed by any beneficiary of Vero Beach Rowing regarding incidents related to club activities. Members and staff need to file an incident report when applicable. The incident procedure is designed to provide a venue for reporting events impacting participant safety. The goal is to provide resolutions that will prevent incidents from occurring in the future and to create a safer environment for all.

An incident can occur for a variety of reasons. Incidents include but are not limited to a perceived threat of member safety, an injury has occurred, the first aid kit was used, a violation of VBR safety policy, damage to equipment or facility/grounds.

The incident report form can be filled out at the boathouse or can be found online - <https://www.verobeachrowing.org/incident-report/>. The incident report is sent to the Executive Director, Head Coach, Program Manager, and Chair of the Operations Committee. VBR will acknowledge receipt of the incident as the first step in the incident review. Please contact the VBR President ([president@verobeachrowing.org](mailto:president@verobeachrowing.org)) if you do not receive acknowledgement of the incident. The Operations committee will review all incident reports and ensure that resolutions are enacted in an efficient manner.

A summary of the incidents will be included in the Operation's Committee monthly board update. When appropriate modifications to VBR policy will be communicated to the larger organization in a timely manner, either by the operations committee or by the coaching staff, and incorporated into the member handbook.

### Grievances

The grievance policy and procedure intends to support a healthy, respectful and inclusive culture at Vero Beach Rowing for all of its members and beneficiaries (including youth rowers, families of youth rowers, volunteers and guests of the club).

The grievance procedure is designed to provide an open and transparent route for complaints to be made and to be resolved fairly and within a reasonable period. Unprocessed grievances, when aired prematurely or widely, can damage the culture and reputation of the club; as such, we ask beneficiaries of the club to use the procedure in lieu of airing grievances more widely.

A grievance may be filed by any beneficiary of Vero Beach Rowing regarding incidents related to club activities. The definition of a grievance for the purpose of this procedure is a complaint or strong feeling that one has been treated unfairly. A grievance may also include suspected misconduct of a parent, rower, coach, or club director and will be handled as per the procedure below.

The Governance Committee will provide general oversight to ensure the grievance procedures are carried out in a professional, conscientious, and objective manner through a thorough review process. This procedure seeks to operate in a fair and expedient manner; it is not a formal legal process. The process provides for maximum confidentiality of all parties involved.

Informal resolution of grievances through direct conversation between the parties is strongly encouraged to the extent that it can be done with physical and emotional safety of those involved. This formal grievance process is in place to ensure that when informal means of grievance resolution are untenable due to a power differential, or when they have become unproductive, the club can support grievance resolution and thereby maintain the health and wellbeing of the club's members and other beneficiaries.

### Filing a Grievance

To begin a formal grievance procedure, the grievance report form can be found online - <https://www.verobeachrowing.org/grievance-report/>. Grievances reported through the online form are sent to the VBR President, Membership Chair, and Governance Chair. Members may prefer to file the grievance in person. If preferred we recommend the complainant contacts the appropriate grievance processor as designated below:

- Members and other beneficiaries of the club who have a grievance should contact the chair of the membership committee or the VBR President.
- If the grievance involves an employee or board member, the complainant may take the grievance to the governance committee or the VBR President.
- Employees and contract coaches who have a grievance should contact the chair of the governance committee or the VBR President.

We understand grievances are often a sensitive subject and we will take all due steps to preserve confidentiality during any investigation.

### Grievance Review Procedure

The first step in the grievance process is for the designated processor to reach out to the complainant and confirm receipt of the filed grievance within 48 hours. They will arrange an interview with the complainant to collect the necessary information to process the grievance. The processor may ask that the complainant also provide written documentation of the interactions related to the grievance. The designated processor will convey to the complainant the next steps required to achieve resolution of the grievance. If these steps require sharing information with any other individual, the designated processor will inform the complainant of what information will be shared and with whom. With the exception of required reporting protocols for criminal conduct and/or Safesport violations, the complainant may request the resolution process be halted to protect their privacy.

### Grievance Resolution & Board Communication

The goal is to resolve each grievance within 15 business days of receipt. The processor will do their best to address the grievance in this time period; should the process take longer than 15 business days, the processor will update the complainant no later than 15 business days after the complaint is submitted.

The processor will inform the complainant when there is a resolution. The grievance is then considered closed.

A summary of the grievance and its resolution will be documented by the processor and shared with the board members within 48 hours of the resolution of the grievance. The governance committee will keep a record of the summary. Appropriate steps will be taken to preserve confidentiality. Under certain circumstances, investigations may take longer than 15 business days, if this occurs, the processor must inform the board of the status of the ongoing investigation.