

# Mandatory Boater Education

Boater Education training is **recommended** for all boat operators and **required** for those born on or after September 1, 1993.

Successful completion of a TPWD-certified boater education course and possession of a valid photo I.D. are required for any person born on or after September 1, 1993 to operate:

- a vessel powered by a motor of more than 15 horsepower; or
- a windblown vessel over 14 feet in length.

No person may operate a personal watercraft (PWC) or motorboat powered by a motor of more than 15 horsepower on public waters unless the person is at least 13 years of age and has successfully completed a Boater Education Course or is supervised by another person who:

- is at least 18 years of age
- can lawfully operate the motorboat
- is on board the motorboat when under way

Proof of completion of the requirements to obtain a vessel operator's license issued by the USCG satisfies the requirement for completing a boater education course in this state.

A person guilty of one of the following (operating) violations, shall be required to successfully complete an approved boater education course *and* pay a fine. Failure to complete the boater education course within 90 days will result in the person committing an offense that is a Parks and Wildlife Class A misdemeanor.

- any personal watercraft (operating) violation
- reckless or negligent operation
- excessive speed
- reckless operation and excessive speed
- hazardous wake or wash
- circular course around any swimmer or occupant of a vessel engaged in water activities
- interference with markers or ramps
- obstructing passage
- operating boats in restricted areas
- operating vessels in scuba diving or snorkeling areas
- skiing during illegal hours
- skiing in a manner that endangers life or property

Boater education courses from other states are acceptable if approved by NASBLA (National Association of State Boating Law Administrators).

For information on boater education courses, call (512) 389-4846, option 4, or [visit Boater Education \[https://tpwd.texas.gov/education/boater-education/\]](https://tpwd.texas.gov/education/boater-education/).

Paddlers are encouraged to [take the free comprehensive canoe, kayak, and paddleboard safety course offered online \[http://boaterexam.com/paddling\]](http://boaterexam.com/paddling). This course is a great way to help make your outing more enjoyable and safer. This course **will not** replace the boater education course required by law. [Visit Texas Paddling Trails \[https://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/boat/paddlingtrails/\]](https://tpwd.texas.gov/fishboat/boat/paddlingtrails/) for a complete list of officially designated paddling trails including average float times, public access points, paddler safety and more.

## 15-Day Boater Ed Deferral

A **one-time** 15-day boater ed deferral may be purchased any place licenses are sold.

Deferral Option	Eligibility	Item	Fee	Availability
15-Day Boater Ed Deferral	Texas resident or non-resident	850	\$10	<a href="https://www.txfgsales.com/">Buy online [https://www.txfgsales.com/]</a>