



Friends of Detroit Rowing

POLICY RO-2019-001 Cold Weather Policy (Version 1.3)

SECTION A

1. Policy Expiration:

This policy has no expiration date and is in effect until amended.

2. Overall Policy Purpose:

FODR acknowledges that rowing in cold/frigid weather conditions requires additional caution and safety protocols for the well-being of its rowing participants. The purpose of this policy is to adopt the aspects of safety and cold weather guidelines, published by the Safety Committee of USRA, as they apply to rowing on the Detroit River in the areas traditionally used by crews launching from the Belle Isle Boathouse. Specifically, this policy:

- Defines conditions when additional safety precautions and procedures should be followed based on cold weather conditions
- Identifies the additional safety precautions and procedures to be followed when cold weather condition criteria are met

3. Responsible Parties:

This policy applies to all crew members and scullers using FODR equipment, coaches and launch drivers in all DBCC programs, and all visiting rowers.

See link to USRA guidance. <http://www.usrowing.org/safety-guidelines/>

4. Reporting:

All incidents should be reported immediately to the Rowing Operations Board Member, Safety Committee Chair or Safety Committee member (verbally or via email.) The Safety Committee Member will take the statement about the incident and complete a formal Safety Incident Form. These will be discussed at committee meetings and actions taken. Safety Committee members can be found on the DetroitBoatClubCrew.org website.

Email: FODRSafety@friendsofdetroitrowing.com

5. Penalties for Violation:

Penalties for violations of this policy will result in an “Incident Report” being placed on file with FODR identifying the offending parties. Sanctions can range from being placed on probation, possible suspension, to dismissal from rowing programs.

6. Policy Conditions

This policy is in effect in EITHER of these following cold weather conditions:

- a) Water temperature is 50⁰ F or colder. **Air temperature is irrelevant.**

OR

- b) **IF THE WATER TEMPERATURE IS ABOVE 50⁰ F (FOR MORE THAN 3 DAYS)**, the combination of air/water temperature is 90⁰ F or less (e.g. water =55⁰ F air =33⁰ (88⁰F))

SECTION B - POLICY

a) All crews and Safety launch operators must have viewed the USRA cold water safety video before launching under Cold Water conditions b) All coxswains must wear a PFD	This can be efficiently done with an initial team meeting in the early Spring. It can also be viewed online: USROWING Safety Video
c) The “4-oared Rule” will be in effect. No crews are allowed on the water with less than 4 oars	In line with USRA Safety guidance for clubs in cold climates
d) Safety / Coach launches must be equipped with at least 16 thermo blankets and USCG approved PFDs, a ladder, flares and safety whistle.	Required for all Safety / Coach launches year around, all climate conditions
e) Safety / Coach launch must be able to reach any crew under its supervision within 30 seconds (J, MS, U23, C, M, etc).	*Based on USRA guidance which considers river traffic flow, shore line populations, and proximity to emergency services.
f) Safety / Coach launches must have mobile phones or radios and emergency contact numbers prominently displayed (e.g. DNR, USGC, police and/or fire)	Required for all Safety / Coach launches year around
g) 2X shells should have experienced members only.	Required for all programs.

***US Rowing Cold Weather Rowing Tips:**

[http://www.usrowing.org/News/15-01-19/Cold Weather Rowing Tips.aspx](http://www.usrowing.org/News/15-01-19/Cold_Weather_Rowing_Tips.aspx)

The policies of each club are going to be dictated by their situations. Do you row on an open body of water with little hope of an imminent rescue, or do you row on a small river that is lined with houses? Are you a single sculler heading out by yourself, or is your team rowing through the winter? Your club

has to develop a plan that makes sense, and it has to make sure that all the members are aware of the plan and follow the procedures.

US Coast Guard Guide to Cold Water Immersion Survival

<i>Water Temp.</i>	<i>Exhaustion or Unconsciousness</i>
Under 32 degrees	Under 15 minutes
32.4-40	15-30 minutes
40-50	30-60 minutes
50-60 °	1-2 hours

Revision History

Date	Author	Version No.	Summary of Changes
2/28/2019	Wojdyla	1.0	Initial draft circulated to coaches
3/15/2019		1.0	Approved by Rowing Operations, and Head Coach Dr. Bell, and coaches T. Janiak, Z. Weise, and M. Gentile
2/15/2024	Safety Committee	1.1	Updated Section A4 to add Reporting, Section B.2 to reflect current committee
3/6/2024	Safety Committee	1.1	Approved
4/15/2024	Wojdya / w Safety Committee agreement	1.1	Policy Conditions section was updated to include 3 consecutive days at 50 F or above
3/12/2025	Safety Committee	1.2	Reviewed & Approved
4/03/2025	Wojdyla	1.3	Corrected Section 6 - <u>Policy Conditions</u>