
**Community & Economic Development
Committee**

HB 1018

Brief Description: Concerning boater education.

Sponsors: Representatives Lovick, Ryu, Ortiz-Self, Goodman and Orwall.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires operators of human-propelled boats and vessels to possess a boater education card.
- Eliminates an exemption from the Boater Education Card requirement for individuals born before January 1, 1955.

Hearing Date: 1/20/21

Staff: Cassie Jones (786-7303).

Background:

Boater Education Program.

The Parks and Recreation Commission (Commission) is required to establish and implement a program to provide required boating safety education. The Commission must establish a minimum standard of boater safety accomplishment. The Commission must also adopt minimum standards for boating safety education courses of instruction and examination and approve or provide accreditation to boating safety education courses. To obtain a boater education card, a boater must provide a certificate of accomplishment issued by a boater educator for taking and passing an accredited boating safety education course, or equivalency exam, or provide proof of completion of a course that meet the standard adopted by the Commission. The Parks and Recreation Commission is required to charge a fee of \$10 for a boater education card.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Boater Education Cards.

In order to operate a motor-driven boat or vessel of 15 horsepower or greater, a person must be at least 12 years old and: (1) possess a boater education card; or (2) be accompanied by and under the supervision of a person at least 16 years old who has a boater education card. Certain individuals are not required to have a boater education card. Those include the following individuals:

- operators of a vessel engaged in a law commercial fishery operation;
- operators with a United States Coast Guard Marine Operator License when operating the vessel authorized under the license;
- operators of vessels exempt from vessel registration requirements, including vessels for law enforcement or official government work;
- operators of rented, leased, or chartered motor driven boats and vessels who complete the Commission-approved educational checklist in lieu of a boater education card;
- persons who are not residents of Washington and do not operate a motor driven boat or vessel for more than sixty consecutive days;
- persons who are not Washington residents and who hold a current out-of-state certificate that is equivalent to the rule adopted by the Commission;
- persons who purchased the boat or vessel within the last 60 days and have a bill of sale in his or her possession;
- persons, including those less than 12 years of age, who are involved in practicing for or engaging, a permitted racing event; and
- any person born before January 1, 1955.

Failure to possess a boater education card as required by law is an infraction punishable by a fine; however, the penalty must be waived if the boater provides proof to the court within 60 days that he or she has received a boater education card.

Summary of Bill:

Operators of human-powered boats and vessels are generally subject to the same rules and requirements relating to boater education cards as operators of motor-driven vessels of 15 horsepower or greater, including the requirement to possess a boater education card while operating the boat or vessel.

"Human-powered boats and vessels" is defined as all boats and vessels that are human-propelled and includes, but is not limited to, canoes, kayaks, rafts, and stand-up paddleboards.

An exemption to the boater education card requirement for persons born before January 1, 1955 is eliminated.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 14, 2021.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.