



Dragon Boat Charleston Member Handbook

2020-21

This handbook is a working document and is reviewed annually.

It is for use as a guide and is not an all-inclusive document.



MEMBER HANDBOOK

Rev. 2020

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ABOUT DRAGON BOAT CHARLESTON

HISTORY, MISSION, VISION & GOALS

History: Dragon Boat Charleston (DBC) was founded in 2003 as South Carolina's first all-cancer-survivor dragon boat club. DBC was originally a program of Hollings Cancer Center. In 2008, Dragon Boat Charleston became an independent nonprofit organization supporting cancer survivors. In addition to very active paddling and racing programs, DBC's programs have grown to include community wellness events, off-water fitness and nutrition, and survivor outreach programs. DBC has approximately 200 members.

Mission: The mission of Dragon Boat Charleston is to promote physical and mental wellness among cancer survivors and their community through dragon boating.

Vision: *Redefining Cancer Survivorship*

Goals

- 1) **Nourish the mind, body and spirit through healthy living**
 - a) Year-round fitness through club-based activities
 - i) Dragon boating
 - ii) Winter Wellness programs focused on fitness, health and nutrition programs
 - b) Social support through fellowship
- 2) **Provide a resource for our community demonstrating courage, determination and group cooperation**
 - a) Be a positive role model as individuals and as a charitable organization
 - b) Survivor Outreach Wellness Initiative
 - c) Educate the community about the benefits of nutrition and exercise for cancer prevention, treatment and survivorship
 - d) Team building
- 3) **To advance the sport of dragon boating**
 - a) Provide dragon boating opportunities to the community
 - b) Provide competitive and noncompetitive dragon boating opportunities for members
 - c) Promote the inclusion of an all cancer survivor team in dragon boat festivals
- 4) **Advance awareness of the Dragon Boat Charleston model**
 - a) Demonstrate beneficial effects of the DBC mission on survivorship through community partnerships
 - b) Educate medical providers about the benefits of dragon boating
 - c) Develop partnerships to concretely demonstrate the value of the DBC approach

Organizational Structure

The Board of Directors (BOD) is primarily responsible for the mission and governance of DBC. Duties include but are not limited to:

- Establishes club policies
- Legal and ethical integrity of club
- Planning & process oversight
- Financial & asset oversight
- Employment of top employee(s)

The Executive Director (ED) is a full-time position and reports to BOD. The ED is primarily responsible for day-to-day operations and implementation of policies. Duties include but are not limited to:

- Fund development & fundraising
- Club programs including community outreach
- PR & Media
- Club communications
- Adherence to mission
- Community outreach

The Program Coordinator (PC) is a full-time position reporting to the ED. The PC is primarily responsible for the club's paddling and wellness programs. The PC works closely with the coaching, steering, safety and wellness committees to ensure consistent policies that reflect the club's goals and responsibilities. Duties include but are not limited to:

- DBC Paddling Structure
- Steersperson, safety boat and coach management
- Coordination of practices
- Member conflict resolution
- Fitness & recreational programs
- Safety management
- Race coordination

Club Committees work in advisory capacity to share ideas, needs and program initiatives that are in line with the Board and Staff defined Strategic Plan. Committees report to the staff and BOD. A board member and a staff member serve on each club committees to ensure best communication and accountability.

CLUB Committees: Water and Safety, Management, Outreach, Fundraising, Wellness

Board Committees exist to oversee the financial and overall management areas of the nonprofit organization.

BOARD Committees: Executive, Finance, Governance, Safety, Management

Contacting DBC

Club Website: www.dragonboatcharleston.org

Club mailing address: 1643 Savannah Hwy. #261, Charleston, SC 29407

Executive Director: Amy Brennan

- amy@dragonboatcharleston.org
- Ph: 843-714-4131

Program Coordinator: Neves Richards

- neves@dragonboatcharleston.org
- Ph: 843-714-4131

Board of Directors:

- Chair@dragonboatcharleston.org

Club Communications

DBC club emails

- Club emails are sent out weekly usually on Wednesday afternoons. Emails should be directly related to club activities such as: weekly schedule, races, events, and member updates (as appropriate). One time per month the enews goes to all Dragon Boat subscribers the other 3 weeks go to members only.
- Information sent by DBC's club communications may also be found on the website (i.e. practice schedules, upcoming events, racing information, etc.)

Facebook

- Member announcements (grandkids born, good news, etc.) should be approved by those involved. These announcements should be directly related to club members or activities.
- Outside opportunities (from other groups or organizations) that are directly related to club mission, i.e. dragon boating and cancer survivorship.
- Nutritional or fitness information. This may include information from established resources and DBC partners.
- Pictures of club paddles, races, members, etc. specific to dragon boating and club activities.
- Please consider the impact of any posts or pictures on those referenced by it. What you think is funny may be offensive or embarrassing to someone else.
- Messages should be positive and supportive. Negative posts or inappropriate pictures will be deleted. Negative or disparaging posts on DBC's Facebook may result in being blocked from the page.
- Occasional staff will create a FB Group page for specific events like our fitness challenges.

The following are not appropriate for communicating via club email or DBC Facebook postings:

- Promotions, invitations, announcements, or opportunities that are not directly related to club members, dragon boating or cancer survivorship.
- Negative comments. Bullying, intimidating or harassing behavior.
- Photos that may be embarrassing to others.

Bristol Marina - Communication with Bristol Marina should go through the PC or ED. Club members should not make ANY requests to Bristol Marina.

Media and Fundraising Policies

Media - All media outreach should be coordinated with Executive Director.

Fundraising- All fundraising efforts (requests to companies/businesses, events, etc.) should be coordinated with Executive Director.

Financial Policies

In an effort to streamline accounting and ensure financial stewardship, DBC has implemented a financial policy that discourages cash payment. Payments to the club should be made by check or credit card. Credit card donations and membership fees are accepted on our website. Checks should be paid payable to Dragon Boat Charleston or DBC and mailed to:

Dragon Boat Charleston, 1643 Savannah Hwy. #261, Charleston, SC 29407

If you have a question about the policy or need guidance on it, please contact the ED.

DBC PADDLING STRUCTURE

The Paddling Structure is guided by the mission, vision, and goals of Dragon Boat Charleston (DBC) approved by the Board of Directors.

Roles & Responsibilities

All club members, volunteers and staff agree to abide by DBC's Code of Conduct. Failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in revocation of club status (coach, steersperson, paddler, etc.).

All coaches, steerspersons and safety boat drivers are trained in their respective roles. Most are also CPR/AED certified. Trainings are offered annually for anyone interested.

Safety Committee

- Responsible for assessing the safety needs of DBC and implementing safety policies
- Work with the PC to schedule safety drills.

Water Committee encompasses Safety Boat Drivers, Steerspersons and Coaches.

Safety Boat Drivers

- Knowledgeable of boat regulations
- Responsible for well-being of all crews while on the water
- May direct steers people to stay closer together and go in same direction
- Practice safety and emergency drills with crews while on the water
- In conjunction with steerspersons and coaches, makes judgement call on water/weather conditions (i.e. bad weather, thunder/lightening, white caps). This is typically done before leaving the dock but inclement weather may cause the decision to be made on water.

Steerspersons

- Steer during practice
- Responsible for the safety of the crew while on the water and have highest level of command of the boat (their commands override the coach)
- In conjunction with safety boat drivers and coaches, makes judgement call on water/weather conditions

Coaches

- Plan and execute practices
- Provide instruction, emphasizing safety and technical aspects
- Follow safety protocol as developed by Safety Committee
- In conjunction with safety boat drivers and coaches, makes judgement call on water/weather conditions
- Serve in an advisory role on Coaching/Water committee
- Promote participation and encourage paddlers regardless of ability level

Paddlers

- Register for practice online. If unable to attend after signing up, please remove your name.
- Abide by special guidelines that may be established by the board in special circumstances (i.e. pandemic eligibility)
- Arrive 15 minutes prior to practice time and be prepared to push off at practice time.
- Wear Coast Guard approved PFD (lifejacket) at all times while in a boat. This includes while bailing or cleaning. PFD should be securely fastened and worn in the appropriate manner (i.e. waist PFDs should be worn in front). Visually inspect the Cannister and check the expiration date printed on the bobbin. Cannisters should be replaced every 2 years or whenever deployed.

- Be supportive and respectful of all coaches, steerspersons and crew members.
- Pay attention to the coach and steersperson at all times. Weather and water conditions may change rapidly and require immediate action.
- Coaching instruction to others should not be provided by paddlers unless specifically requested by the coach leading the practice. Continued coaching in the boat may lead to suspension of practice privileges.

Practice Guidelines

Dragon Boat Charleston Practice Guidelines:

- Individuals must wear a US Coast Guard approved, adjusted, and fastened, personal floatation device (PDF) at all times.
- A safety boat/driver must be in the water for the entire practice and a steer must be in the boat at all times.
- Practice will be called in the event of Coast Guard/DNR weather warnings and advisories that the river or other location where we will be paddling might be dangerous for paddlers, including some small craft advisories, hurricane conditions, and other.
- All paddlers must, at all times, use their own judgement and discretion.

Dragon Boat Charleston Club Guidelines for Practice:

- Staff reserves the right to cancel practice in the event of severe weather conditions. When conditions are questionable a decision can be made on the dock. Dock decisions are at the discretion of the volunteers (safety boat, steer and coach). All volunteers must unanimously agree that conditions are safe in order to proceed with practice.
- Staff and volunteers will consider many variables including wind, current, fog/visibility, extreme temperatures and number and experience of paddlers.
- When possible, Saturday practice will be called by 3pm on Friday. However, given the constantly changing conditions, paddlers should assume practice is on as scheduled but know that it is always a possibility to call the practice on the docks for safety concerns.
- In all cases, as with practice during the summer months, individuals should exercise their own judgement in determining if they should participate in a practice.

We do not paddle in extreme weather conditions (hurricanes, flood watches, small craft advisories, etc.). It is our goal to announce cancellations a minimum of 2 hours prior to practice time via “Remind” (see below). However, for “less extreme” and unpredictable weather conditions (i.e. thunder/lightening, winds), practice may be called on the docks by the coach, steers person and safety boat driver.

If you do not receive a notification, you should assume that practice will be held as planned.

REMIND – Stay in the know about practice schedule changes or cancelations by signing up for DBC REMIND text alerts. To sign up use your phone to text @dbcupdate to 81010.

“Practice Groups” and “Teams”

Practice Groups refer to regular club practices and are open to all club members. Practice Groups include: ACS (All Cancer Survivors), BCS (Breast Cancer Survivors), Men and Women.

Teams refer to specific teams participating in a race. DBC’s current race teams include: Awakened Dragons (ACS/Mixed), Charleston Thunder (Men), Holy City Silver Dragons (Women), Paddles and Pearls (BCS). Paddlers may race on any team for which they qualify.

Group Practices

Group Practices are open to all club members but are identified by practice groups. These are not race team practices. Group practices are held throughout the week at regularly scheduled times throughout the paddling season. Club members register for practice online using the DBC website.

Paddlers sign up for the type of practice they find most appropriate. Paddlers do not need to be racers to paddle in group practice sessions.

- Seating is based on website sign up. Boat is to be filled first with members who have registered.
- Paddlers who do not register for practice online may be able to paddle if a seat is open.
- A minimum of 6 paddlers are required for boat to leave dock (for 10-person boat).

Race Teams

Race teams are developed for specific races and race team practices are scheduled accordingly.

- Race team practices may start up to 12 weeks prior to race day.
- Race team practices are usually held outside of regularly scheduled group practices. Practice times are determined by the team’s coach(es).
- Race team practices are coordinated to avoid conflicting with regularly scheduled group practices when possible.

Most race teams are determined by who signs up for the race (i.e. age, survivor, gender). Races are announced to **all** club members through DBC club email, allowing anyone interested to sign-up.

Club members sign up for a race using the team sign up link located on the member tab. In the event a team has more registered paddlers than race roster allows, a waitlist will be added on a first come/first served basis. This is the process for most races, with the exceptions of Regionals, Nationals and Worlds. For these highly competitive races (Regionals, Nationals, Worlds), the coach(es), will clearly define and communicate a strategy for team selection. This information will be communicated to the club by the PC.

The PC provides oversight for consistency with club Mission and Goals. Therefore, most team communications are through the PC. The PC should be copied on any email communications from the coach.

How Race Team Participants are Chosen at DBC

1. Races are announced by PC via club-wide email.
2. PC posts race team sign up on website with a strict deadline.
3. PC sends the list to the coaches and team division is determined if not already set. All paddlers signed up for any race are expected to attend at least 80% of race team practices. Signing up for a race is a commitment!
4. If the list is longer than the race roster allows, a wait list will begin on a first come/first serve basis. If the wait list is long enough to crew a second boat, a second team may be considered for the race given sufficient funds and financial approval.
5. For Regionals, Nationals and World competitions, the above process will remain in place. If the number of interested paddlers exceeds the race roster limit by DBC's established deadline, the following components may be used to determine final team:
 - a. Attendance
 - b. Attitude
 - c. Boat composition (left/right paddlers, balance of boat, etc.)
 - d. Performance - at coaches' discretion and must be approved by PC. May include: seat pulls, erg trials, outrigger canoe (OC) trials, etc.
 - e. For Worlds priority is given to team members that paddled on the National team winning the berth.
6. The team(s) is announced by the PC
7. While the team is training for a specific race, the coach has the option to add "closed" practices outside of regular group practices. This allows teams to paddle together in preparations for their upcoming race. This should not occur outside the established 12-week period for race practices. Coaches must work with PC to ensure volunteers are secured for these practices.
8. 26 paddlers including Drummer and Steersperson (14 for 10-person boats) must be signed up by the deadline established by DBC. The PC may at times extend race sign-up deadlines. In the event enough paddlers are not signed up, DBC may cancel participation in that race.

Paddling on non-DBC race teams: DBC is always proud to have our members participate in racing outside of DBC's commitments. To clarify, these groups do not fall under the auspices of DBC and do not represent DBC. Questions about policies related to this should be directed to the PC.

Traveling with DBC

The following rules are in place to promote teambuilding as well as fiscal stewardship of DBC's donors' dollars.

When traveling with DBC, you are representing the club. Responsible and respectful behavior is expected at all times. Supporting each other, especially new paddlers, is encouraged.

- DBC enters into contracts and financial agreements with hotels, bus companies, etc. based on the commitment of paddlers. While we recognize that plans sometimes have to change, we rely on your commitment. In the case of an emergency, contact the PC and your coach if you must make changes to travel.
 - Paddlers and supporters are expected to honor any DBC travel commitments they signed up for (buses, hotels, etc.).
- When DBC books a block of rooms for a team, all team members should stay in hotel booked, unless otherwise approved by PC and coach. Approvals may be available in extenuating circumstances.
- While traveling on a DBC-sponsored trip, all team members must abide by DBC's code of conduct at all times.

DBC Boats Paddler Capacity for Practice

(does not include steersperson or coach/drummer)

Boat	Min	Max
10-person	6	10
Fly (small yellow)	8	12
BUK (Brenda or Fab Four)	12	20
6-16 (purple or red scales)	14	24

DBC Code of Conduct

Dragon Boat Charleston (DBC) encourages teamwork, cooperation and understanding among people of diverse backgrounds, abilities, ages and fitness levels. All club members agree to abide by the Code of Conduct below. Grievance policies are in place, should the need arise. Please see the ED for more information if necessary.

All club members agree to observe and abide by the following responsibilities with regard to abuse, discrimination and harassment:

- a) respect the rights, dignity and worth of all participants and officials regardless of their ability, gender or cultural background;
- b) not knowingly discriminate against, abuse, harass, ridicule or embarrass anyone covered by this Code of Conduct;
- c) be fair, considerate and honest in all dealings with others;
- d) treat all persons with respect, dignity and proper regard for their rights and obligations;
- e) respect the privacy of others;
- f) act at all times in a fair and sporting manner and in such a way as to ensure good relations between teammates and between crew(s) and other organizations;
- g) not engage in behavior that intimidates teammates or other crew members or teams during practices or competition
- h) take responsibility for one's actions particularly not showing up at practice if not feeling well or having any signs of cold, flu etc.

Whenever possible, coaches will address breaches of the code of conduct after practice, unless deemed necessary during practice. Team members may speak to their coach regarding code-of-conduct concerns after practice.

I agree to abide by the Code of Conduct policies of the DBC Club while engaged in the activities of the club, and also agree to comply with all safety rules and procedures presented during all activities.

I understand that DBC's authorized representative(s) or agent(s) have authority to revoke my participation in the DBC Club at any time if, in the judgment of the representative(s) or agent(s), my actions or general behavior are determined to be unacceptable. Misconduct will justify a verbal warning, a written warning, and then a written letter of dismissal. The process of mediation and/or hearings can be requested by contacting the Executive Director or Board President.

