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1. INTRODUCTION

First, we wish to thank you for becoming a volunteer for Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating (CRAB). You are following in the footsteps of thousands of CRAB volunteers who have provided tens of thousands of our guests a safe, friendly, and enjoyable sailing experience for nearly 30 years. CRAB prides itself on being a model adaptive boating program that is recognized nationally by the largest insurance carrier for sailing and many other organizations.

The CRAB Sailing Operations & Guest Awareness Manual provides volunteer Skippers, Crew, and Support Staff with the necessary information to perform your jobs well for our guests with disabilities and children from at-risk communities. It is not intended to replace your authority and/or proper actions you may need to perform in the event of an emergency or when life-saving actions are necessary.

This Operations Manual is written to inform and enhance your ability to provide safe and courteous service to our guests. Note: Please refer to all CRAB participants as guests. In this respect, we are seeking to treat our guests as we would want to be treated if we were a guest at someone’s home. At CRAB, we want to treat our guests as special guests.

Sailing is a new activity for many of our guests and some of them may feel uncomfortable on the water or in a new situation. Many of CRAB’s guests do not know how to swim or have not been on a sailboat. Because of this, it is vital to make sure they understand what will happen before you proceed down the dock, before they board the boat, and before

Our mission is to provide our guests with a safe, enjoyable, and respectful sailing experience.
leaving the dock to sail. This includes: walking or rolling down the center of the dock, getting on/off of the boat with support and one-hand for the boat, how their wheelchair or other important items will be stored and secured while sailing, the safety and stability of our boats, the fact that our boats typically heel and pitch while sailing, the reality that they may get a little wet, the need to be aware of the boom, etc. Discussing what to expect can ease many of the concerns they may have about sailing.

This guide consists of the following sections:

II. General Sailing Operations, Fleet, and Equipment
III. Training for CRAB Volunteer Skippers, Crew & Support Staff
IV. Interacting with Our Guests – Disability Etiquette
V. Instructional Techniques for Guests
VI. Transferring Guests Using Transfer Box, Hoyer Lift, or Manually

Skipper Sailing Check List
Volunteer Sign-Off form

II. GENERAL SAILING OPERATIONS

CRAB Fleet

CRAB’s fleet of six Beneteau First 22A (A for adaptive) sailboats have been specially modified to take persons with disabilities sailing with safety and comfort. Four boats have bucket seats permanently installed and two have removable seats. If guests do not require the special seats, i.e. Kids Sailing Camps, the removable seats can be removed and placed on the dock.

All sheets are led to the cockpit and they should be organized and checked for any damage or problems before the guests’ arrival. Be sure the boat is clean, if not please clean, wipe down any dew or dirt, and hose off if necessary before guests arrive. Make sure the cockpit is clear of any extraneous items that may be a tripping hazard, i.e. foam foot-blocks, water bottles, radio, backpacks, etc. Sometimes the bilge needs to be pumped out if there has been rain. Please complete the Skipper Checklist section before boarding guests.

CRAB has a Sea Pro 18 center console with a 90hp motor and a Zodiac with a 9.9hp motor to serve as fleet support boats. The Fleet Directors will be the primary operators of these boats. However, if you have the experience and ability to operate one of the power boats, please let the Fleet Director know so you can be checked out.

CRAB enjoys having volunteer Skippers with many years of experience as well as many new to CRAB volunteer Skippers. If you are new, please talk with our veteran Skippers to learn the “CRAB Way” of conducting sailing operations with our guests. We strongly believe in Safety First and Have Fun second as our two top rules!
Beneteau First 22A’s

The First 22A’s have a 5’11” swing keel that is adjusted using a winch handle (righty - raise; lefty – lower) to a retracted depth of 2’4”. The keels are set at 4’ 6” for sailing through the channel at SPSP. Do not adjust the keel when sailing at SPSP. If you run aground, the keel will kick-up. Pictograms on the left of the keel trunk indicate when the keel is at 4.5 feet. You may lower the keel to its full depth of 5’11” when sailing to or from Annapolis. These boats also have twin rudders. Do not adjust the rudders. The twin rudders make this boat have a larger turning radius at slow speeds in forward, so exercise caution when docking. CRAB docking policy is to enter the dock area in reverse and steer to the dock. Go slowly!

When docking a First 22A proceed to the dock in reverse as control of the boat is greatly enhanced in this direction. You will be directed by Staff where to dock, generally the same position you departed. Please keep your radio nearby as you may receive instructions on your approach to the dock and using the radio will eliminate the need to have Staff shout instructions to you, i.e. slow down, steer clear of docked boats, etc.

The jib is roller furled and the main is protected in a sailstack on the boom. Simply unzip the sail cover and leave in place while sailing. The main has two reef-points and prior to sailing the Fleet Director will determine if the mainsail should be reefed and by how much (single or double reef) for the given wind and weather conditions prior to leaving the dock. CRAB does not want to have Skippers reefing the main while sailing with guests if possible, which is why the sails are set at the dock prior to sailing. This may include not unfurling the jib or only partially unfurling the jib. If it is expected that a reef may be required while sailing, it is important for the Crew to perform this task while the Skipper sails the boat or vice versa.

When raising the mainsail, it is necessary to have the boat pointed directly into the wind. Any deviation will cause the fully batten mainsail to get caught in the lazy jack lines. If this happens, you will need to lower the sail, point the boat directly into the wind, and hoist the sail. DO NOT try to man-handle the hoisting of the sails. The mainsail is stuck on something (Lazy Jacks or track) if is difficult to raise. The sail is easy to raise or lower if held directly into the wind. For this reason, it generally is not recommended to hoist
the mainsail at the dock. However, under mild wind conditions from the West, the hoisting of the mainsail can be accomplished.

The boat has a roller furling jib and the jib furling line is a grey line on the starboard side of the boat. It should be released from the cam prior to unfurling the jib. Do not let the jib fly out too quickly as it will cause the roller furling line to tangle in the drum. Keep some pressure on the jib to prevent this from happening. The line can be “tailed” into the furling drum so it does not create a wrap that will cause the line to jam and prevent the jib from being furled. Otherwise, to clear the jam, you may need to go to the foredeck to untangle it (not easy while underway with guests).

The reef lines on the mainsail are green for the first reef and red for the second reef. The black halyard on the main must be loosened to lower the main and set a reef. The gooseneck of the boom has a J-hook to set the reef in the new clew. The reef line is pulled until the appropriate reef cringle can be secured on the J-hook. Theouthaul line may have to be reset as well. Re-hoist the mainsail using the halyard with more tension the stronger the winds. For additional instruction, please ask a Fleet Director for assistance.

Before leaving the boat, please place the seatbelts straps over the seat and outside of it so nothing is laying in the bottom of the seat. Rainwater collects in the seat and ruins the belts.

Please make sure all reefs are shaken out of the mainsail after docking and before leaving the boat.

**Martin 16**

The Martin 16 is made in Canada as is the servo motor that controls the boats “Sip & Puff” steering system. The boat is designed for a quadriplegic guest to independently sail the boat using a joystick or the “Sip & Puff” system that has two straws that fit into the mouth of the guest. One straw controls the sails and the other controls the rudder. If the guest sips on the sail straw the sails are adjusted in by the large winch in front of the guest. By puffing on the straw, the sails will be let out. The rudder straw works much the same way with a sip turning the boat to port and a puff to starboard. The Martin 16 has tandem seating with the guest in front and the Skipper sitting aft. The Skipper can control the boat’s rudder from this position, but will have to reach over the guest to adjust the sails if the line should become too loose or wrapped on the winch. Due to the low freeboard of the Martin 16, it is best sailed in the pond or when there are no waves on the Bay. This boat has to be towed to the Bay and back to the dock. It is a fast, fun boat for guests who need a specialized boat to accommodate their disability and desire to sail independently.
Lehr Motors

These motors are fueled with liquid propane. Fuel level can be checked by visually inspecting the translucent portion of the tank or removing the strap, lifting and shaking the tank. If unsure of the fuel level, please ask the Fleet Director to assist you. To start the motor, turn the throttle back and forth a couple of times. Place the transmission handle on the left of the engine in neutral, set the throttle handle in between idle and full-throttle, gently take up the slack in the pull-cord (do not pull without taking slack out of the cord) and pull the pull-cord. CAUTION: Make sure all guests or crew are clear of the area that you will be pulling the cord. It takes two or three pulls for the motor to prime itself and start. It is important to use upper body torque when pulling the starting cord. Turn sideways to the stern of the boat, stretch your arms behind you (i.e. backwards golf swing) and start by turning your upper body quickly to the bow and half-way through your turn, pull the starter cord with your arms. Once the motor starts, return the throttle control to slightly above idle until it warms up. Please operate the Lehr motors at half-throttle for better fuel efficiency. Do not operate the engine in reverse at more than half speed; this can damage the engine or cause it to quickly raise up.

If the main fuel tank is empty while motoring, attach a spare canister (the boat should always have 2 spare canisters on board). Remove the large, black, cylindrical plug, extend out the black fuel hose, and attach to the canister. Disconnect the fuel hose leading to the main fuel tank (never operate with both a spare canister and main tank attached). You may need to pull the pull cord several times to purge air from the line before it starts.

The LEHR motors can have the air in the line, that can be bled by sticking a paper clip into the middle of the aluminum square piece on the aft right side of the motor (facing aft). Ensure that the valve to the propane tank is secure and open. To reach this area the top cover of the motor needs to be removed. When the paper clip is inserted into the hole you will hear a hissing noise. That is the air escaping the line. When you smell propane, you can stop bleeding the line and the motor is ready to start after replacing the cover.

Torqueedo Motors

CRAB has one Torqueedo motor that is not generally used for fleet sailing. However, we provide this information and instruction if a Skipper is on a boat with an electric motor. When installing the battery and throttle control, follow the instructions on the throttle control: attach the main cord first and the thinner cord second. When disconnecting, disconnect them in reverse order. Remaining battery life is indicated on the control panel.
of the throttle control. There is no transmission. To run in reverse, turn the throttle in a counter-clockwise direction. There is a **two-second delay** from the time you turn the throttle from the neutral (center) position and when the prop starts to turn; plan for this! Battery life is consumed at an exponential rate when increasing speed, so be judicious! It is best to cruise at 400 watts, the bottom number on the throttle controller (if it is installed). If you have any questions about the operations of the motor, please ask the Fleet Director prior to leaving the dock.

**Weather**

Sailing operations should be conducted with the highest level of safety and guest comfort in mind. It is important to be very aware of the weather and wind conditions prior to departing the dock, while sailing, and returning to the dock. The Fleet Director will provide all Skippers the wind, wave, and tide conditions in a briefing prior to sailing. Under no circumstances should a skipper depart the dock if they have any question about the weather. The Executive Director or Fleet Director shall have sole responsibility for determining the suitability of sailing after properly reviewing the weather radar, forecasted wind conditions, tides, etc. This shall include: a go or no-go decision, any reefing of sails that should be performed before leaving the dock, where to sail (i.e. in the pond or immediate area), and, how long to sail with guests.

It is the skipper’s primary responsibility to be aware of their guest’s physical state and if they are comfortable, cold, hot, wet, seasick, or in need of water to ensure a pleasant sail. If the guest(s) are not comfortable, the skipper shall return to the dock as expeditiously as possible. In addition, the skipper shall notify the Fleet Director by radio that they are returning to the dock and the reason in case any guests are in need of immediate medical assistance.

While sailing, if the wind or weather conditions should change, the skipper should report the new weather conditions to the Fleet Director and ask for guidance. It is not difficult to furl the jib on the boats, but with guests, it is more challenging to reef the main. For this reason, CRAB’s policy is to reef the main at the dock prior to departure if the wind is likely to cause the boat to heel excessively.

Basic weather guidelines for CRAB’s Fleet of First 22A’s sail well with full sail in winds less than 12 knots (does not apply to Martin 16). Above 12 knots, the mainsail may be reefed. At 15 knots the mainsail must be reefed using the green reef line. Also, above 15 knots the boats will be restricted to sailing in the pond because of the wave action in the Bay off of Sandy Point State Park and guest comfort. The jib also may be partially or fully
furled if there are gusts above 15 knots that cause the boat to come about. In higher winds, the main sail shall be double-reefed with the red reef line and the jib furled if necessary to keep the First 22A in a comfortable sailing position. Skippers must be aware of their own comfort level in various sailing conditions. **Do not push your comfort level at any time…with guests or sailing alone.** Please let the Fleet Director know before leaving the dock if you are not comfortable with conditions be it due to wind, cold, or heat…or your health. If guests or crew ask to return to the dock, the Skipper should reduce sail and proceed to the dock immediately.

**Designated Sailing Area**

The designated CRAB primary sailing area is to be used by Skippers for the vast majority of all sailing events. Only when the Fleet Director allows for departing from this area are Skippers to venture into the ship channel to the East; South of the Bay Bridge, or North of Sandy Point Lighthouse. The drop sail zone is well outside of the SPSP channel break wall and North of the bridge. Do not sail under the Bay Bridge unless you are East of a piling marked 19A from the North and 10A from the South. Cutting under the bridge to the West or inside of these pilings can and will result in the mast hitting the bridge.

In addition, **avoid sailing out into the ship channel on the Bay, east of Green 93 or 95.** If the wind dies or the tide is working against the boat, it can be a scary situation to have a large container ship approaching at 15 knots with no room to maneuver to avoid your boat. **So, be aware, conservative, and observant of the weather, tide, and ship traffic when sailing on the Bay.**
When returning to Sandy Point State Park be sure to drop sails well before nearing the channel. It is preferable for Skippers and Crew to start the motor and drop sails at least 300 yards from the break wall entrance. From this distance the current, tide, or wind should not be a factor and there is still plenty of time to start the motor before getting too close to the Bay Bridge. If you have problems with starting the motor at this point, unfurl the jib and sail away from the bridge and hail a Fleet Director or CRAB Staff on VHF Channel 78 for assistance...or have another Skipper tow you back to the dock. If you are unable to start the motor and your boat is approaching the Bay Bridge, you can go to the bow locker and take out and set the anchor. Be sure to tie-off the bitter end of the anchor line before dropping (not throwing) the anchor. Having the anchor set should prevent any damage to the boat until assistance arrives.

If you have the winds from the S, SE, E, or NE, it may be possible to sail in the channel to the pond. However, it is highly advisable to have the motor running in case of any emergency that demands immediate propulsion. Do not attempt to dock with the sails up. All sails must be furled before proceeding in reverse to the dock!

**Equipment**

CRAB sailboats are provided with one oar, extra propane fuel canisters, a throw cushion, a manual bilge pump, an anchor, foam blocks to support guest’s feet, a microfiber towel, and additional lines or straps. A checklist of equipment for the boats is at the end of this document. In addition, each boat will carry a VHF radio that must be kept on and tuned to the designated channel (usually Channel 78) and put on High Power (versus Low). If the radio is not on High frequency, CRAB Staff and/or Fleet Director on shore cannot hear you and you cannot hear them. Skippers are responsible for hearing the radio and responding to the Fleet Director at all times when called. The VHF radio should be turned on and the volume all the way up and in hearing distance of the Skipper at all times. Please complete the attached Skipper Checklist Pre-Departure section before leaving the dock. There is a radio holder in the cockpit of every boat. Skippers are responsible for signing out the radios and doing a radio check prior to sailing. Radios are to be returned to CRAB Staff and signed back in before the Skipper leaves for the day. Skippers are expected to reimburse CRAB for any lost or unreturned radios.

**Fleet Directors**

CRAB Fleet Directors are paid, seasonal employees who have responsibility for all activities associated with boat preparation, maintenance, weather observation, sailing operations, Skipper check-rides, and the overall safety of CRAB operations on the dock. **Skippers and Crew must follow any and all instructions given by the Fleet Director during a CRAB sailing event.** The Fleet Director has the authority to remove any Skipper or Crew who is in violation of safe operating procedures, personal decorum around guests and
peers, and/or any activity that may be considered unsuitable for a CRAB volunteer. Please respect and follow their directions. If a Skipper or Crew has an issue with any Fleet Director action it should be brought to the immediate attention of CRAB Staff on-site. CRAB Fleet Directors are responsible for ensuring that Skippers review the Sailing Checklist prior to guests boarding the boat. They can assist with additional instructions on how to best start Lehr motors or other sailing issues. However, Skippers must be able to start the motors before being checked-out and approved by a Fleet Director.

Prior to the arrival of guests to the park, the Fleet Director on duty will provide a briefing on weather conditions, how the boat’s mainsail will be reefed (if at all) prior to leaving the dock, and the location that sailing will take place, i.e in the pond if wind conditions are high (above 15 knots from the North, East or South) or in the Bay in CRAB’s designated sailing area. The decision also may be made not to sail if there is no wind, it is too hot, it is raining, or bad weather is approaching. If the boats are being shuttled to Annapolis or back to the park, it is the Fleet Director’s responsibility to maintain radio contact with all Skippers and vice versa. The Fleet Director will be responsible for reporting any safety issues or conditions to Skippers and drafting a Sailing Event Report for submittal to the CRAB office with weather conditions, boat or equipment maintenance requirements, and any Skipper or Crew issues needing attention by CRAB Staff.

Skippers

CRAB volunteer Skippers are responsible for the safety and pleasure of CRAB guests. Skippers must wear a PFD at all times when on the dock or sailing. Skippers are to be focused on anything that may create a safety issue or hazard for someone on the dock or on board. Reporting any safety issues of concern to CRAB Staff takes priority over any sailing services. If necessary, all operations must come to a stop if the safety concern is of a serious nature and a risk to our guests and volunteers. Skippers must sit in the cockpit and not sail while sitting on cockpit combing (rail). It is a bad example for our guests and CRAB is unable to use any photos of you in this position. You may sail sitting on the rail when shuttling the boats to/from the park without guests, i.e. to Annapolis.
Before any volunteer is allowed to be a CRAB Skipper, they must have extensive and relevant sailing experience (decades) to merit becoming a Skipper. Skipper sailing experience is reviewed and evaluated by CRAB’s Executive Director. Upon acceptance into the CRAB Skipper on-boarding program, the Fleet Director will be responsible for having the new volunteer Skipper serve as Crew on two sailing trips (at least one with guests) of at least an hour in length each with one of CRAB’s Fleet Directors or an experienced Skipper designated by the Fleet Director.

After two successful trips as a Crew member, the prospective Skipper must conduct two sails as Skipper under observation with one of the Fleet Directors or a Skipper designated by the Fleet Director. Following successful completion of the two sails as a Skipper under observation (both with guests), the Fleet Director may provide his/her approval of the Skipper for future sails with guests without supervision. The Executive Director/Operations Manager will be notified by the approving Fleet Director when a new Skipper has successfully passed the on-boarding process and is capable of being a CRAB Skipper in the future.

Additional check-rides may be required to ensure Skipper competence with guests or to enhance familiarization with the First 22A. This is not uncommon and should not be viewed negatively. CRAB wants every Skipper to be very comfortable sailing with guests. A qualification checklist for skippers-in-training is provided by the Operations Manager at first training sail.

**Crew**

CRAB volunteers serving as Crew must be responsive to the Skipper and guests. Crew must wear a PFD at all times on the dock or sailing. Crew are vital in providing assistance to guests walking or rolling down the dock to the boats (in the center of the dock), assistance with getting guests from wheelchairs onto the transfer box or Hoyer lift, and securing guests in their seats or ensuring they are comfortable in the boat and their PFDs are secure. Crew will be responsible for tossing dock lines to other crew or staff on the docks when docking. Be sure to have dock lines clear of life lines, stanchions and shrouds before tossing. Please stay clear of guests when tossing lines to the dock. Throw the lines well past the person intending to catch the dock line, but not in their face. Crew also may be required to fend the boat off of the dock on departure or arrival. Having the boat hook on deck and ready can be important when lines are dropped in the water or a dock needs fending off. Being prepared and having a good understanding of who is doing what and when with the Skipper is important when docking.

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It is the Crew’s responsibility to assist the Skipper and ensure guest safety and comfort on the boat.
Support Staff

CRAB Support Staff working on land will be responsible for registering guests, having guests sign liability waivers, making crew and boat assignments, helping guests select and fasten PFDs. Support Staff must wear PFD if on the dock. Assistance with the guest’s PFDs takes time and needs to be performed prior to departure. Asking guests if they need to use the bathroom prior to sailing should be common practice. Support Staff can engage in conversation with guests and their families/caregivers to learn how they knew about CRAB, if they have sailed before, or if there are any issues Skippers or Crew should be aware of when sailing. Guests need to be organized in groups for the Skippers/Crew to escort to their boat. Support Staff should introduce guests by their name to the Skipper or Crew. Support Staff will ask guests to complete a survey after they have returned to shore and removed their PFD. No guests are allowed on the dock without wearing a PFD and escorted by a Skipper/Crew.

Rule #1
Safety First!

Boarding Boats

Skippers and/or Crew must escort guests only with PFDs from land to the boat. This applies to guests returning to land. PFDs must stay on until reaching land. Guests are not to walk unescorted to ensure that they do not fall in the water or trip on lines or equipment. Water bottles are located in the cooler on the dock. Be sure guests have adequate water before leaving the dock.

Assistance in boarding should be offered to all guests regardless of their ability or disability. Ensuring that everyone is safely in the boat and secure in their seats is the responsibility of the Skipper with the assistance of Crew. For able-bodied guests, let them know you want to hold their arm, just above the wrist. Do not hold hands as this will not provide a firm supporting point for you to be of assistance. When boarding guests, the stern of the First 22A must be secured tightly to the dock with no gap in between the boat stern and the dock. This will require loosening the bow line in order to snug-up the stern. After the stern is secured, the bowline may be re-secured. Do not board the First 22A without securing the stern as stated above or the boat will heel a foot or more when stepping aboard. NOTE: This instruction for securing the boat also applies when disembarking. However, once everyone is off of the boat, the lines can be adjusted to allow the boat to float freely one-foot off of the dock.
Once everyone is settled, introductions can be made and an explanation of what will happen after casting off, sailing out of the pond, and on Chesapeake Bay is most appropriate. Making the sailing interesting and enjoyable for everyone on board is the Skipper’s responsibility.

Getting guests involved in the actual sailing of the boat is one of the highlights for most guests. Skippers/Crew should ask if the guest is interested in sailing or working the sails and explain how they should go about doing either activity well before they are expected to do it. Depending upon guest ability they can be assigned working the jib sheets (2), steering the boat, or handling the mainsheet. Try and get as many guests sailing and involved as possible. Emphasize that sailing is actually a team sport that everyone can enjoy.

Be sure to have a smile on your face. Guests are going to be more comfortable around Skippers who look and act like they are enjoying themselves. Being a Skipper may be a serious job, but you can communicate your confidence and ability better with a smile.

Safety

Before stepping on a First 22A with someone already aboard, please let them know verbally of your intentions, by saying “Stepping aboard.” And, when disembarking, notify the Skipper or Crew by saying, “Stepping off.” Due to the light displacement of the First 22A, the boats can rock (roll, bounce, etc.) quite a bit and cause the person on board to be thrown about or have the boom swing around during the onboarding and disembarking process. Providing this simple courtesy will be appreciated by all.

Prior to casting off, the Skipper shall conduct a safety briefing that covers:

1. Passengers remain seated during docking, both departure and arrival.
2. Location of Type 4 throwable (seat cushion), life line, and fire extinguisher.
3. Warning about the boom (head below boom, especially when tacking).
4. Keep lines free and clear of guests.
5. In case of MOB, throw Type 4 (seat cushion) to person in water; keep eyes on MOB. Prepare to lower ladder on stern of boat. First thing: Call Fleet Director on radio and commence recovery maneuver. Skippers are never to leave the boat to try and retrieve a guest from the water. They are wearing a PFD and should be able to float until sufficient manpower is available to effect a rescue.
6. Secure a line to the guest and keep them close to the boat. Depending upon the guest’s disability they may not be able to board using the stern ladder. If they can board using the stern ladder, the engine must be turned off. If the guest will require a lift using the mainsheet halyard or additional crew to assist, please wait until the Fleet Director arrives in the CRAB chase boat.

Make sure all guests stay in the cockpit and do not lean out of the boat. It is extremely dangerous for a person to go overboard, particularly persons with disabilities. Recovery of the guest is even more challenging. Throwing the flotation cushion to the person in the water should be the first order of business when close enough for them to reach it. Have someone maintain visual contact with the MOB at all times. Any overboard situation demands that the Skipper notify CRAB Staff or Fleet Director immediately by VHF radio of the situation and to stand by. **Skippers are never to jump in the water to rescue a MOB.**

Drop all sails and stay with the person, preferably with them holding onto a line or sheet to stay close to the boat. CRAB Staff or Fleet Director will bring a boat to the scene to assist with boarding the guest in the water. If necessary, the Fleet Director or CRAB Staff will notify DNR or USCG to request assistance or medical support. **Never attempt to board a guest with the motor running.**

Likewise, when docking, do not allow any guest to get in a situation that takes them out of the cockpit. Throwing a line to the dock can easily be performed from the bow or center of the cockpit when the boat is close to the dock. The Crew will be responsible for securing the sailboat to the dock and not until the boat is secure should anyone leave their seat. **The stern quarter must be immediately adjacent and secured to the dock.**

Please make this known and assign any roles for able-bodied guests before arriving at the dock.

If you have any questions about the information in this guide or when you are working a sailing event, please feel free to ask a CRAB Staff member. We are available to assist you in performing your important job to the best of your ability for our special guests. **Our first and most important rule at CRAB is: Safety First! Rule number two is: Have fun!**
III. ORIENTATION FOR SKIPPERS, CREW & SUPPORT STAFF

The key to successful communication is clear speaking, using known terminology or nomenclature, and strong listening. Tasks should be explicitly stated by the Fleet Director so that Skippers, Crew and Support Staff understand what is expected of them. This applies to any communication between CRAB Skippers, Crew and Support Staff as everyone needs assistance at times. Orientation should include disability awareness and very clear definition of the tasks to be performed by everyone. Also important is commitment from the Skippers, Crew and Support Staff for which they are being depended upon to do what they say they will do. Communication works both ways. Skippers, Crew and Support Staff need to be made to feel free to make known their own limitations and expectations to the CRAB Staff or Fleet Director.

Sailing is supposed to be fun, but it won’t be for someone with a bad back who attempts to lift a sailor into a boat. There will be others who can provide the necessary physical strength. Do not attempt to board or assist any guest weighing more than you. Always ask for assistance. Skippers, Crew and Support Staff should report any issues they have with CRAB Staff and/or Fleet Director as soon as possible. Please make a point of introducing yourself to CRAB Staff and the Fleet Director.

If a Skipper is having difficulty sailing or docking their boat, do not shout your corrective action recommendation. It is up to the Fleet Director or Executive Director to provide the necessary instructions preferably by radio, depending upon the circumstances. This also will serve to keep confusion and noise to a minimum with guests present. As the Skipper, do not respond back by yelling. Do as instructed by the Fleet Director and discuss the issue later after guests have departed. Focus on fending off a boat without placing yourself in harm’s way, preferably by grabbing the bow or stern pulpits if standing on the dock.

The overall focus of orientation is centered on the needs of the guests being served and meeting those needs to the satisfaction of all involved. CRAB Skippers, Crew and Support Staff (this applies to guests as well) need to have with them sunscreen, proper clothing for the weather, and refreshments or food as necessary. Water is provided for all events, but if you feel you need a beverage other than water (non-alcoholic) then please have it in a reusable bottle. Skippers, Crew and Support Staff are expected to work for the time of the sailing event. If unable to make that commitment, you should inform CRAB Staff of the duration you are able to commit prior to the event.

CRAB Skippers, Crew and Support Staff should dress appropriately for a professional look around guests. Shirts must have sleeves and preferably collars. No tee-shirts with any

Everyone must wear a life jacket or PFD on the dock or aboard a vessel. No exceptions!
offensive logos or words will be permitted. Proper boating shoes must be worn at all times while working as Skipper or Crew. No flip flops or sandals permitted. Clothing must be clean and presentable at all times. Wearing the appropriate clothing for the weather conditions is not only smart, it is critical when Skippers, Crew and Support Staff must be comfortable in order to provide our guests with an enjoyable experience.

Onboard Education & Entertainment

CRAB has placed a laminated “Fun Facts Sheet” on board to use when there appears to be an interest by the guests to learn more about Chesapeake Bay. The facts can be introduced in a conversation or used as quiz questions for the guests to try and answer. It is up to the Skipper or Crew to decide the best way to make a game of this information.

Last, but not least...

No one is allowed on the dock or near a boat without wearing a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD). Anyone on the dock without a PFD shall be asked to leave immediately and not return until they are wearing a PFD. All Skippers, Crew and Support Staff have the responsibility to abide by this rule. They also must request that the person not wearing a PFD leave the dock, and to report anyone not wearing a PFD to CRAB Staff.

Remember: Safety First and Have Fun!
Communication

Personal space

Wheelchair information

Prosthetic devices

Attitude

A person with a disability is just that – A person with a disability. People with disabilities have special needs and may need extra assistance, or be unable to do some tasks. The majority of people with disabilities are capable of performing some, if not most activities necessary to sail the boat. As a Skipper or Crew do your best to find what a guest's abilities are so the guest may feel engaged and involved in the sailing of the boat. **Focus on their ability, not their disability.**

Some volunteers may be uneasy when meeting a person with a disability for the first time. You should treat a person with a disability just the same as he/she would treat any other person. If there is a feeling that a person may require assistance, **he/she should be asked if they would like help before touching or assisting them.** If they ask for assistance, **inquire how they would like to be assisted.** CRAB strives to provide volunteers with achievable tasks and they are encouraged to progress at whatever rate you are comfortable. If you have any questions or need assistance, please ask a CRAB Staff person or Fleet Director who will be very happy to answer your question or be of assistance.

CRAB does not want Skippers, Crew, or Support Staff struggling with a task that is beyond their capabilities for physical or mental reasons. CRAB encourages everyone to take an active and supportive role in the operation of the program. Skippers, Crew, and Support Staff are provided training and support to acquire new skills for the safety and operation of the sailing program. Remember that our guests with disabilities often don’t see themselves as disabled and prefer to be treated just like everyone else and should be. It is best to always refer to the...

**ABILITY** rather than **DISABILITY.** One’s disability is not focused upon; one’s ability is acknowledged and nurtured.

Disability Awareness

There are a wide range of disabilities, and even the same type of disability will affect people differently. Some categories of disabilities and some challenges they may present include:

1) **Disabilities that may limit physical mobility:** spinal cord injury (SCI), cerebral palsy (CP), paralysis (paraplegia or quadriplegia), muscular dystrophy (MD), fibromyalgia, cystic fibrosis, amputations, multiple sclerosis (MS), arthritis, and spina bifida.

**Possible Challenges for Sailing:**

- Equipment may need to be adapted to suit the person’s needs.
• The Skipper/Crew may need to assist or be assisted with boarding of a guest on and off the boat using a transfer box or Hoyer Lift.
• The guest may fatigue easily due to muscle weakness and spasticity.
• Mobility issues may increase susceptibility to hypothermia in cooler conditions and hyperthermia in hot, humid conditions.
• There may be some difficulty with balance on and off the boat due to coordination issues, level of spinal cord injury/paralysis, and sensory loss.
• Reduced sensation or paralysis in the limbs could lead to injuries of the feet and legs. CRAB sailboats have foam blocks to provide elevation of guest’s legs when requested. In addition, sail ties can be used to secure guest legs if they so desire. A cockpit throw cushion or padding under the buttocks of those with spinal cord injuries also can be a source of comfort.
• Loss of bladder or bowel control. Use a water bottle to clean the area. Bring the sailboat back to the dock as quickly as possible for the guest’s comfort.

2) Developmental disabilities: Down syndrome, traumatic brain Injury (TBI), cerebral palsy, autistic spectrum disorders, cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, epilepsy, and diabetes

Possible Challenges for Sailing:
• Balance may be a problem on and off the boat.
• Guests may fatigue easily.
• Depending on the disability, it may be necessary to modify some of the sailing equipment.
• The Skipper/Crew may need to assist with helping the sailor on and off the boat.
• Sensory impairments may reduce the ability to feel pain, and an injury may go unnoticed.
• Diabetics need to monitor their blood sugar levels. Ask the guest what his/her needs are and ask the caregiver or family member to inform you of any developments while sailing that require returning to the dock. The guest might need to keep their insulin nearby in a cool dry place as well as a snack should they have an insulin reaction (low blood sugar).

3) Visual impairments: Anything that causes a guest to have difficulty seeing such as: congenital blindness, amblyopia, strabismus, cataracts, diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and macular degeneration. A person who is blind does not mind being referred to as blind.

Possible Challenges for Sailing:
• Guests may have difficulty becoming oriented within the facility. This can include the direction of the water and docks, location of boats and equipment.
• Difficulty understanding the direction and distance to the buoys and other boats on the water. Audible aids and cues can help the sailor.
• Difficulty understanding the direction that the wind is coming from, and the velocity of it. Sensory cues will help the sailor. Additionally, giving consistent and frequent communication and feedback while out on the water will be helpful and useful to the visually impaired sailor.
• Not understanding where everything is positioned within the boat. Using tactile cues and different size lines, as well as an orientation, will help familiarize them with the boat.
• May have a desire to lean over the side of the cockpit in an attempt to touch and feel the water.

4) Hearing impairments: Anything that affects a guest’s hearing such as conductive hearing loss such as sensor neural hearing loss, auditory neuropathy spectrum disorder, mixed hearing loss, and central hearing loss. People who are deaf do not mind being referred to as deaf.

Possible Challenges for Sailing:
• Difficulty identifying specific control lines, sheets and fittings. Labels on equipment and visual cues, such as marks on particular lines or fittings, will be beneficial to the sailor.
• Unfamiliarity with the facility or sailing area. Using maps and charts provides a great resource for acclimation and/or orientation.
• Miscommunication on when to perform actions such as moving the tiller or trim a sail. Creating well-defined (and agree on) clear visual signals with the hearing impaired sailor will solve this problem. For example, thumbs up means sail is at a good trim, thumbs down means sail needs adjusting. Waving your hand side to side means let sail out tapping your knee means trim sail in. Waving your hands over your head means applause to a deaf guest.
• Some deaf or hearing impaired guests may be able to lip read. If they can read your lips, find out before sailing. You can then speak directly facing them to enhance your sailing instruction. Always speak directly to the deaf or hearing impaired guest and not to their translator.

5) Cognitive disabilities: Autism Spectrum, Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), Dementia, Attention Deficit disorder (ADD), dyslexia, dyscalculia, Aphasia, learning disabilities or some kind of difficulty with cognitive calculation or processing.

Possible Challenges for Sailing:
• Proficiency of the guest’s water safety skills.
• The movement of the boat under sailing or an abrupt change in motion (like heeling over in a gust of wind) may cause him or her to become fearful or erratic.
• Misunderstanding of expectations and directions. Be concise and deliberate when communicating.
• Problem-solving for the guest may be difficult in a challenging situation.
  • Use of nautical terms, could be confusing. Use every day words and slowly introduce the nautical terms if appropriate.

Positive reinforcement, encouragement, and consistency should help the guest process and remember the sailing experience and training. Keep in mind that people living with the disabilities mentioned above may use a mobility, visual, or hearing aid such as a wheelchair, walker, or cane. CRAB guests are generally accompanied by a family member or personal care attendant (PCA).

Certain medications can affect a guest’s endurance, stamina, and focus. It is important that you ask guests or PCA’s what if any concerns and needs there may be, be sensitive to those needs, and monitor the activities they are participating in to make sure that they are comfortable and enjoying their sailing experience.

Please be aware of your guests if they start to act differently during the sail. They could be experiencing dehydration. Fatigue, dizziness, confusion, and lethargy are symptoms as are paleness and withdrawal. Any signs of such symptoms requires immediate attention and hydration.

Be aware that someone with a cognitive disability may have an interest or desire to jump overboard and swim. Making a point with the guest’s family and/or caregiver that everyone must stay seated in the boat and not lean overboard.

View Point

Having a disability doesn’t automatically qualify as needing assistance, but every guest should be asked. Stepping on a boat for the first time may surprise any guest when the boat heels. First and foremost, if you think someone may require assistance, ask if they would like help! If they accept, ask them how best to help and listen carefully to what they tell you. NEVER assume that you know best how to help a specific individual. If they do not know how to facilitate some aspect of an activity, you might suggest possible solutions or ask a CRAB Staff member or Fleet Director.

CRAB guests with disabilities should be encouraged to take an active, supportive role in the sailing of the boat and do as much as possible on their own, IF THEY WANT TO. This enhances their independence and gives them an opportunity to be an active and important part of the sailing event.

Training and support to acquire new skills should be offered to all CRAB guests. It is important for CRAB guests to be given achievable tasks and encouraged to progress at whatever rate they are comfortable. Working as a team provides incredible therapeutic value.

TIP: It is best to always refer to the ABILITY rather than DISABILITY.

The focus should be on achievement, acknowledging and nurturing the ability.
Communication

Skipper and Crew communication with our guests is vitally important for safety and comfort. Please establish proper communication and understanding before departing the dock. Some guests with disabilities may have difficulty with communication. It is important to establish how a non-verbal person communicates YES and NO. Ask them to show “yes” and then “no”.

Communication might become easier when you phrase questions requiring a YES or NO answer. If the person is not able to even give you a “Yes or No” response, ask the person who brought the guest how much the guest understands and what the best way to communicate with that him/her.

The PCA (Personal Care Attendant), caregiver, family member or friend should be able to show you significant signs or communicative mannerisms that are identifiable and helpful. You need to be patient when a guest has difficulty with verbal communication. If you can’t work out what the guest is trying to tell you, ask them to slowly repeat what they’ve said. Don’t be embarrassed to say that you can’t understand. If you have a question, just ask. Speak to them in a clear and concise tone, keeping your sentences short and simple. Give them time to answer and never cut them off by finishing their sentences. If you as Skipper or Crew cannot hear well, please let them know in advance so they can speak more loudly to you.

When speaking with a guest in a wheelchair, talk directly to them. Do not talk around or over them to the PCA or companion. Try getting down to eye level and make sure they can hear you. When interacting with a guest with a hearing impairment, it is important to keep in mind that some of these individuals may have partial hearing loss and can communicate fairly well. Other hearing impaired individuals might read lips or use sign language. If this is the case, always speak while facing the guest.

Be mindful of how they prefer to communicate. If they communicate through sign language see if the guest has a sign language interpreter with them.

When communicating with a guest with a visual impairment, always make sure you introduce yourself and let them know you’re there. It is equally helpful to let them know if you are leaving an area. They may request your assistance but never assume that it is needed. The guest may have a guide dog. Always check with the individual on how to interact with the guide dog. Remember, that this is a service animal. CRAB Support Staff on shore should ask if the guest wants to have their service dog join them on the boat. If so, which in many cases they do, please allot the necessary space in the boat for the service animal and inform the Skipper and Crew to ensure proper loading of the boat. Service dogs also can get seasick, so be aware of how the dog is getting along on the boat.

Communication is a two-way process. Relaying a message through speech or a communication aid is ineffective without a careful listener. When a guest is communicating with you, focus on them and listen to what they are saying. You may want to repeat back the message you think they sending to you to confirm it.
After you have given instruction to the guest, it may be helpful (not necessarily desired) to have the guest repeat back what you are communicating to ensure understanding.

Most importantly, Skippers, Crew and Support Staff should always be observant, respectful, and pleasant to anyone coming to sail as a guest at CRAB. **If guest behavior becomes an issue or problem, CRAB Staff or Fleet Director should be notified immediately and it will be their responsibility to resolve the matter – not the volunteer Skipper or Crew.**

**Personal space**

The use of personal space and physical interaction can be a type of non-verbal communication. Personal space requirements vary from person to person. Unwanted intrusions into personal space might lead to a guest withdrawing or having an outburst, depending if he/she has a behavioral disorder. A physical interaction is one of the most important non-verbal signals. Touching can be perceived as a very positive thing, but it can also be perceived as a negative. **Absolutely do not touch a guest unless you have asked in advance if it is ok and they have instructed you how to touch them.**

On the positive side, touching is one-way people demonstrate protection, support, and caring. In its negative context, touching may signal superiority and dominance. A guest with a disability may not necessarily want to be touched or assisted but is unable to communicate that. Skippers, Crew and Support Staff need to be aware and sensitive to this issue. Be cognizant of the reaction you receive.

If you attempt to assist someone stepping on the dock ramp or boat and reach out to hold their arm, they might not be able to speak up to tell you “no”. Pay attention to their facial expressions or body language. Are they looking angry or worried? Are they trying to pull away? Be aware of how your physical interaction is making that person feel. Better yet, ask the guest before they attempt something you think may require your assistance.

**Safety First!**

*Please note: Any sexual harassment of guests or other Skippers, Crew, Support Staff, or CRAB Staff will not be tolerated and will result in immediate expulsion from CRAB. CRAB volunteers seeing or hearing such behavior are obligated to notify CRAB Staff immediately.*

**Wheelchair information**

Do not assume that a guest in a wheelchair wants to be pushed. ALWAYS ask first. A guest’s wheelchair is part of their personal space. It’s almost an extension of them and should be treated with respect. You should never lean on or hold the wheelchair unless
you are assisting. Never leave the chair unattended without first putting on the brakes. After the guest transfers into the boat, make sure their wheelchair is moved well away from the edge of the dock or water. Try not to leave the wheelchair in the center of the dock while unoccupied. If there is no shelter or cover for the chair, consider turning the cushion upside down or flip the chair over to protect the seated area from the sun or weather.

There are many different models and styles of wheelchairs. People with upper body strength will generally use a manual wheelchair. Manual wheelchairs need to be pushed or self-propelled. Manual wheelchairs come in a wide variety of sizes, colors and performance levels.

Some issues to be aware of with a manual wheelchair: If the chair is difficult to push, the tires may be flat or low on air. Uneven ground, sand, and large stones should be avoided because it is very difficult to push a wheelchair over those surfaces. While on the dock it might be a good idea to keep the brakes on to help keep the chair from rolling. Try not to let the cushion lay on the ground. Some guests may want to use their wheelchair seat in the boat. Remember, the guest will need to sit on that cushion when they return from sailing.

Power wheelchairs are a bit more complicated. They too vary in size and shape. Power wheelchairs need to be turned off when stationary to keep the battery from dying and to prevent any accidental, unanticipated movement. If a powered wheelchair needs to be moved, ask the owner of the chair or his/her care-giver to move the chair. The electronic controls are extremely sensitive to touch. CRAB prefers for a care-giver or family member to move electronic chairs on the dock due to the sensitivity of some controls. Great care must be taken when attempting to operate/move one, especially when on the dock.

Prosthetic Devices
A prosthetic device or prosthesis basically refers to the replacement of a body part, for example an arm or leg. Some people are born without body part(s) and some people have to have body part(s) amputated due to an injury or illness. Make sure that the prostheses are safely secured or stored inside the boat’s cabin if the guest chooses not to wear it. Place the prostheses in a dry and secure area that you and the guest always know where it is while sailing.

V. INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES
When teaching sailing to guests with a disability, you may need to modify some teaching and instruction methods and techniques. If you have any doubts or questions, please ask a CRAB Staff Member or Fleet Director for assistance, advice or counsel. It is better to have this knowledge and understanding before leaving the dock. If you are on the water, contact CRAB Staff or Fleet Director by VHF radio channel 78 and get assistance.

It is the CRAB Skipper’s responsibility for the safety of all guests on the boat. The caregiver or family member on board is responsible for letting the Skipper know if there is any situation that is a concern for a guest. It is important to establish this protocol with the caregiver/family member prior to leaving the dock. If they inform the Skipper that a guest
is having an issue that demands immediate attention, please do not hesitate to notify CRAB Staff or the Fleet Director by VHF radio and immediately return to the dock.

Overall, as stated throughout this guide each guest, Skipper, Crew and Support Staff has unique and different learning abilities and styles. Please be sensitive to these differences.

**Be aware that some guests may not be compatible with others as best you can ascertain.** Notify the Fleet Director or CRAB Staff if you think a change of guests needs to take place before leaving the dock.

Although it is difficult to make generalizations regarding a specific disability, below is an attempt at offering some suggestions/guidelines in approaching the more common issues within a disability group.

**Paraplegics & Quadriplegics**

Most guests with paraplegia and quadriplegia will be able to speak and communicate his/her needs and participate in developing creative adaptations that will make the sailing experience easier and safe. Once the challenge of adapting the boat is complete (secure, supportive appropriate seating; necessary straps for hands/feet; limb protection from hard surfaces, foam blocks for support, etc.), sailing instruction should be the same as for any other sailor.

**Amputees**

Guests with amputated limbs will require additional attention when it comes to weather conditions. If the guest is missing his/her leg(s) they can become overheated more quickly since the blood in their body does not travel to their feet to be cooled before returning to the heart. Be aware that a guest with amputated limbs has a more challenging time controlling their body temperature and plan your sailing time in the heat of the summer to allow for them to return to the shade on land as quickly as possible if necessary.

**Brain Injuries**

When instructing a guest with a brain injury, take into consideration that processing and memory may be difficult, so it is important to talk slowly, clearly and to provide small amounts of information at one time. Break the task down into components. You may find that you need to repeat procedures a number of times before they understand. Visual aids in the classroom and on the boat may be helpful, i.e. using flashcards to show the different parts of the boat.

Each Skipper, Crew and Support Staff must determine the amount of information that can be processed by a guest, including the capacity of short and long term memory, and adjust accordingly.

This may all seem overwhelming, but if you can remember that you have a guest who is most interested in sailing, and who is thinking and living beyond what others expect of them, everyone benefits from sharing in the experience of assisting these guests to learn and enjoy the sport of sailing. Sometimes guests can be reluctant to assume sailing responsibilities, or new ones. But with gentle encouragement and enthusiasm, they
generally willingly accept the responsibility of sailing the boat. **CRAB wants guests to learn how to sail, not just go for a boat ride.**

**Visual Impairments**

When in the presence of a guest with a visual impairment, it is best to speak directly to them, using their name, which lets them know you are speaking to them. Talk clearly, but not louder than normal. It is always helpful to announce your presence, introduce yourself and let them know you are leaving when you do, so they are not left talking to someone who is no longer present. Be specific with directions, i.e. direct him/her to the left from his/her position instead of saying, “over there.”

If/when you are walking with a guest with a visual impairment, talk to the individual while guiding them and give them directions to avoid difficulties, i.e. tell them there is a ramp, a step/object in front of them, slow down until they feel it with their cane or foot and then proceed forward. When guiding, allow the guest with a visual impairment to hold on to your arm at your side or place a hand on your shoulder. They will tell you how they want to be guided by you.

Basically, being with a guest who has a visual impairment should heighten your awareness of your surroundings and in turn, assist them with avoiding any possible hazards.

When instructing a guest with a visual impairment, speaking clearly and giving the fullest explanation of technique will be extremely helpful. Remember that they visualize in their mind so your description will be very important. Avoid use of “visual cues” with those who are completely blind.

Sometimes it may be helpful if the guest can feel the Skipper actually performing a particular movement or the Skipper moves the person’s hand through the movement, i.e. steering with the tiller, adjusting a jib or main sheet. Offer verbal feedback on the progress of an activity that may naturally be observed by guests with vision can be very helpful and encouraging. Let the guest know what the boat is doing on the water, i.e. heading into the wind, sailing downwind, tacking, etc.

**Hearing Impairments**

Guests with hearing impairments may use hearing aids, lip reading, sign language, or written notes to enhance their communication with others.

**Hearing aids**

Hearing Aids only amplify sounds; they do not clarify them much. Background sounds also get amplified and this makes it difficult for the person to isolate sounds. So, if possible, background noises should be kept to a minimum. Also, remember that when sailing, the wind may affect the ability to hear in general, and therefore can be more challenging for a guest who is hearing impaired, so alternative communication may need to be established, i.e. hand signals.

When a guest with a hearing impairment is lip reading, it is best to be at the same height level as the guest you are speaking with to make it easier for them to read your lips. Conversations should be kept simple and to a minimum in order to avoid confusion. It is
also good to remember that talking quickly, moving a lot, or smiling while speaking make lip reading difficult. Additionally, beards and mustaches make lip reading very difficult if not impossible.

When giving instructions in the presence of a guest with a hearing impairment, be sure you have the guest’s attention so they can ascertain the whole message. Hand gestures and facial expressions can be very helpful in making the meaning clear. Use standard movements/body language that people with hearing impairments can understand. Make sure you keep your hands away from the face, so the guest can read your lips and expression. Check that you have been understood. This can be done with a simple “okay” sign with a thumbs-up.

**Written Notes**

Written notes can be used any time necessary or appropriate, but it is best not to rely on them unless absolutely necessary. It is better to communicate via methods described above. With patience and practice, you will find what works best for you and the hearing impaired guest.

Special Note: There is a risk of social isolation for those with a hearing or a visual impairment because of difficulty in participating in conversations, so efforts should be made to include and encourage these guests in conversation.

**Cognitive Disabilities**

An intellectual disability is life-long disability that affects the cognitive processing ability of an individual, such as Down syndrome, Autism Spectrum, Cerebral Palsy, and traumatic brain injury (TBI).

Skippers, Crew, and Support Staff need to be aware of some common denominators among the population of people with intellectual disabilities. Any one guest may not display all of the following characteristics, but rather some of them, and to varying degrees: inability to think in abstract terms; lack of decision making ability; poor short term memory; learning difficulties and generally a few literacy/innumeracy skills; poor co-ordination and mobility skills, often due to lack of appropriate opportunity, or inconsistent concentration spans.

Skippers instructing guests with an intellectual disability should acknowledge that the level of expectation is crucial. Keep verbal instructions basic and brief. Be clear, precise, deliberate, sequential, and then reinforce your message.

When instructing guests with intellectual disabilities, demonstrating the activity and allowing the guest to participate in the demonstration gives the guest a standard with which to model his/her performance.

Guests with an intellectual disability tend to learn more by doing than looking and listening. When teaching new skills, be sure to move the guests through the desired motions. Praise and encouragement are very important.
Break down skills into small teaching components, ensuring each part is learned fully before progressing.

Review and repeat skills, and drill in many different ways and situations. Reinforcement should be spontaneous and immediate. Teach basic skills. Keep practice time on specific activities short to avoid loss of concentration and boredom. Be sure to vary your activities and drills.

While sailing, a guest with an intellectual disability may become fearful and react in an unexpected manner. Guests with intellectual disabilities may react negatively another guests with intellectual disabilities if their reactions to a given situation on the boat elicits a different reaction, i.e. one guest may scream when excited and the other guest may dislike loud noises and become withdrawn (actual situation at CRAB). Guests should be monitored closely until their level of confidence is ascertained. On the other hand, a guest with an intellectual disability may show no concern for his/her own personal safety or the safety of others.

Again, initial close monitoring is necessary.

Consistency in Skipper, Crew and Support Staff behavior and basic instruction is both important and helpful for guests with an intellectual disability.

Always check with caregivers/family members and guests themselves as to how they are feeling when they arrive, and if there is anything specific that needs to be monitored that day. This is most important for those guests who may be more dependent and be less able to advocate for themselves.

Most importantly, enjoy the experience of sharing and learning with CRAB’s guests. CRAB Skippers, Crew and Support Staff derive as much out of the experience as does the guest with the disability.

Wounded Warriors/ Recovering Warriors

Wounded warriors are not especially different from other CRAB guests with disabilities, but the cause of their injuries and type of injury can be very different if it happened during combat. Warriors may be larger, stronger, or better able to work around their disability than someone from the general public due to the extensive physical therapy they undergo. It is best not to inquire about their injury or combat experience unless they want to tell you. Asking them how much boating or fishing experience they have is a good start to conversation. If they have family members sailing be sure to include them in the conversation. Members of the military are used to working as a team. It is important to get every guest/family member engaged and part of a team sailing the boat. They don’t get this opportunity to re-engage as a family unit while involved in a physical activity, so make the most of it.

Sometimes generic conversation about military service is OK, such as: which service were you in? Where were you stationed? What was your MOS or specialty training? What did you like most about military service can be innocuous, non-threatening, and there are
layers of answers which allow the veteran to say as much or as little as s/he is comfortable communicating.

If a warrior is sailing with their service dog, remember the animal is a service dog and not a pet. Dogs have been known to get seasick, so pay attention to them as well as the guest.

Warriors with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) may be a little more challenging to engage (maybe not). You should be able to get them engaged in sailing with their family or friends playing a supportive role. Be sensitive that there may be “trigger events” that can cause anxiety for the warrior, i.e. a loud noise such as a starting gun, a jibe of the boom, or yelling.

CRAB has a long history of serving our wounded warriors and teaching them how to sail and/or race. They are extremely appreciative of what CRAB volunteer Skippers and Crew do for them. So enjoy yourself and share your love of sailing with them while you are together on the water. It is the least we can do for those who have given so much for our country.

VI. TRANSFERRING GUESTS USING TRANSFER BOX, LIFTING, OR BY HOYER LIFT

Guests with physical disabilities generally require assistance in transferring from their wheelchairs, walkers, or crutches to the boat from the dock. Transfers can be done in a variety of ways. In every instance, the boat must be secure to the dock. The stern quarter must be tied immediately adjacent to the dock with no space (remove fender). Only qualified personnel who have been trained should use the Hoyer lift or transfer box.

Positioning of Guest and Transfer Box

In order to properly prepare the boat for a transfer, remove the fenders and bring the boat alongside the dock. Ensure as much contact as possible between the dock and the stern quarter of the cockpit area of the boat. There should be no slack in the stern dock line (at most 6” of line between the dock cleat and the boat cleat). Make sure everything
is clear for the transition from the dock to the cockpit prior to starting the process. Checking the area twice is good practice by both the Skipper and Crew.

Place the transfer box in a location where there is enough space to deploy the slide into the cockpit. Ideally the base of the slide will be positioned so that the end rests two to three inches from the edge of the cockpit seat, immediately adjacent to the seat the guest will be sitting in. The flotation cushion should be placed underneath the slide so the metal bar is not resting on the fiberglass cockpit seat. Position and secure the boom to the far side of the cockpit using the traveler. Make sure the mainsheet is tight and cleated in case the boom is used as support and it will prevent flailing.

The First 22A will need to have weight placed on its dockside rail in order for the transfer box slide to have a downward slope to the cockpit seat. This may take two people to lower the height of the freeboard. A third person should be positioned in the cockpit to gently guide the guest’s legs and feet into the cockpit for this process. Some guests will require support for their back as they transfer from their wheelchair and get on the transfer box. This may require one or two volunteer Staff, family members, or caregivers to assist. Using the transfer box can be a labor intensive operation to ensure proper safety and support for a guest. Do not be shy about asking for additional assistance before starting the boarding process.

3-Stage Independent Transfer Box

This is more detailed information on the use of the transfer box with CRAB guests using a wheelchair, have difficulty standing, or may have a visual impairment and need assistance in boarding. - Position the transfer box so that the slide is immediately adjacent to the seat the guest will be sitting, or facing the seat on the outboard side of the cockpit. Make sure the slide angles downward onto the cockpit seat (next to the seat the guest will be sitting in). If there is not a downward angle, the Skipper, Crew or Support Staff must stand on the rail to lower the freeboard for the slide to be at a downward angle or slide. Place a cushion underneath the slide bar to prevent it from scratching the fiberglass cockpit seat. All of this work and positioning of the transfer box should be done prior to having the guest get on the box.

- Move the guest from their chair or standing position to a sitting position on the transfer box. Guests with upper body strength and use of their arms may prefer to make the transfer by themselves without much assistance. However, please have them explain how they will make the transfer so you know what is happening and can be positioned to be of assistance if needed.

Ask the guest how they would prefer for their legs to be lifted to the transfer box from the dock. Guide, slide and gently pull the guest down the transfer box ramp to the preferred seat. Be sure to go slowly and keep shoes and clothing in place on the guest. Make sure the transfer box is positioned as close as possible to the chair.

- Have someone positioned in the boat in front of the slide to guide the guest down the slide. Having a person in back on the dock doing the same thing is helpful and provides better support for the guest’s back. When the guest’s feet reach the cockpit sole the
guest can inform you how they want to be lifted or transported from the slide to the seat. Watch out for the boom, or have it secured outboard.

- Once in the seat be sure to secure the 4-point seat belt around the guest. Ask the guest if they would like to have a foot rest (stored in the boat cabin). It is a block of foam that slides under their feet. A microfiber cloth in the cabin can be used to create a soft cushion between the guest’s neck and the shoulder harness. If the guest requests a sail-tie to secure their legs in place, use a simple slip knot that can be easily untied in an emergency.

*Note this information may be redundant to the prior information on the transfer box positioning, but it is well worth repeating.

1-4 Person Full Body Lift*
A body lift from a wheelchair to the boat can be done with the assistance of 2-4 people to lift (lifters), but is most commonly done by two lifters. The proper ways to do this should be demonstrated by someone who has been trained in order to maintain safety for both the lifter and participant. It is most important to LISTEN to the person you are transferring, or to their companion/caregiver if they cannot communicate. They will direct the lifters as to the best way to assist in the transfer. Make sure that the guest’s back is well supported by someone who can handle the weight, the knees of the guest must be supported, and feet kept free from catching on anything during the transfer. *This is not a preferred method of transfer by CRAB and should not be performed unless approved and assisted by a CRAB Staff Member or Fleet Director.

1-Person Full Body Lift*
It is important to have a second or third person stabilize the boat at all times during the transfer.

* Note: Anyone who is lifting a guest in and out of a chair, or in and out of a boat, should remember to lift from the knees when they stand up and not use their back to facilitate the lift. This will help prevent unnecessary back injuries! This is not a preferred method of transfer by CRAB. Generally, this type of transfer is performed by a guest’s caregiver or a family member.

2-Person Extremity Lift (not best for guests with shoulder injuries)
The guest crosses his/her arms across the chest and grips own wrists. One lifter stands behind the guest and reaches under guest’s armpits at the shoulders and reached around to grasp the guest’s forearms. The second lifter reaches under the knees of the guest. Both lift simultaneously to move the guest from chair to dock or boat using proper lifting techniques (lifting through the knees not the back).
Hoyer Lift Transfer
The CRAB floating dock has two base mounts for the Hoyer hydraulic lift on the right and left side of the dock, depending upon which boat a guest will be boarding or a preferred seat position. The Hoyer lift is operated by CRAB Staff or Fleet Directors. However, it is good for Skippers and Crew to know what they are doing.

Place the Hoyer Lift securely in the base mount and lower the lift by releasing the pressure from the hydraulic pump.

Prior to placing a guest in the Hoyer Lift, make sure the boat is in the correct position to swing the guest immediately over the seat on the boat. Position the boat so that the seat the guest will be placed is immediately below the hangar attached to the end of the arm on the lift. Once confirmed, firmly secure the boat in position. If necessary, have a Crew member maintain the boat’s position.

Next, swing the arm back over the dock to a position the guest’s wheelchair can be reached by the hangar. Make sure the arm is not swung back over the dock at a height that may strike the guest’s face or body. The arm will likely be positioned close to the guest’s face, so be particularly careful when positioning the arm with the hangar and have someone place a hand on the end of the arm if necessary to protect the guest’s face.

The guest will need to have a proper lifting cloth or sling with attachments for connecting to the hangar on the lift arm. Generally, guests arrive with their own lifting cloth and possibly sitting on it in their chair. If not, CRAB has a sling stored in the trailer at SPSP. The sling has four, color-coded, loops on the corners that are to be connected to the metal hangar. Connect the same colored loops to the hangar for the two back loops and the same colors for the leg loops. The two, back loops are connected straight over the guest’s back to the hangar. The two, leg loops are crossed on the hangar to secure the legs in position. A CRAB Staff Member or Fleet Director must be present for the use of the Hoyer Lift with a guest.

Once the guest’s sling is secure on the metal hangar, the hydraulic pump can be pumped to raise the guest from their wheelchair. After gently lifting the guest from their chair have the chair removed from under the guest. Raise the guest to a height that is sufficient to swing the guest over the deck of the boat to the boat seat. Ask the guest if they want a cushion or their wheelchair cushion placed in the seat before guiding the guest to the seat.
Position the guest immediately above the seat and slowly lower the guest with the assistance of a Crew member in the boat guiding the guest’s body firmly into the seat. Lower the arm to unhook the sling loops from the hangar. Be careful to keep the arm away from the guest’s face. The sling can remain underneath the guest while sailing and the seat belt can be easily attached over the guest sitting on the sling. Raise the arm and swing it away from the cockpit and back over the dock.

To lift a guest from the boat using the Hoyer Lift this process is repeated. The positioning of the boat so the lift will reach the guest is important and Crew can hold the proper boat in position. It is not as critical to have the chair placed exactly where it needs to be on the dock as it can be moved into position by the caregiver while the guest is attached to the Hoyer lift. Gently let the air out of the hydraulic lift and position the guest back into their wheelchair. Have the caregiver assist with the removal of the sling underneath of the guest. Return the sling to the CRAB registration table or the trailer. Do not leave it on the dock or in the boat.

The Hoyer lift is to be returned to the CRAB trailer at the conclusion of sailing day. Do not leave on the dock.

Source: US Sailing Adaptive Sailing Resource Manual (modified and updated for CRAB operations.)
CRAB SAILBOAT CHECKLIST

BOAT #: Please circle: 1 2 3 4 5 6 DATE:________________________

PRE-DEPARTURE CHECK:

SEAT MOUNTS/STRAPS – CRACKS/WEAR
SAFETY BRIEFING – HEAD, HANDS, FEET
ALL GUESTS WEARING PROPERLY Sized PFDs
GUESTS STRAPPED IN/BACK or SEAT CUSHIONS if necessary
GEAR IN CABIN PROPERLY SECURED:

___ Foam block footrest ___ Life line ___ Anchor and Rode
___ Winch handle ___ Boat hook ___ Docking lines (at least 2)
___ Fire extinguisher (charged) ___ Oar ___ Type IV throw cushion
___ 2 Fuel Canisters ___ Bilge pump handle ___ Fenders (2)
___ Chart of local area ___ Bucket and sponge with 6-feet of line attached
___ Two-way marine radio (operable Ch 78)

Orange Box with: ___First Aid kit ___Electric distress flare (operable) ___Orange Flag ___Horn
___Registration ___Tissues ___Gloves ___Paper clips ___2 Screwdrivers ___Pliers ___Spare shackles

ENGINE CHECKED/CLAMPED
PROpane FUEL LEVEL SATISFACTORY
SAILS/LINES CHECKED FOR WEAR
CHECK KEEL DEPTH – 4 ½ feet
THROW CUSHION IN COCKPIT

POST-SAILING CHECK:

ALL PERSONAL GEAR AND TRASH OFF BOAT
ENGINE RAISED/FUEL TURNED OFF
BOAT LINES CLEATED PROPERLY
BOAT FENDERED PROPERLY
TURN OFF RADIO & RETURN
SEATBELTS OFF THE SEATS

ITEMS NEEDING REPAIR/COMMENTS FOR STAFF:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

RETURN RADIO AND THIS CHECKLIST

Skipper __________________ Signature __________________
Volunteer Skipper, Crew, Support Staff Acknowledgement Form

Chesapeake Region Accessible Boating, Inc.
Volunteer Operations Protocols & Guide
Adopted March 1, 2019

Name:  

Address:  

Phone:  

Email:  

I, the undersigned, acknowledge that I have read and understand the information contained in the CRAB Fleet/Guest Operations Manual. I agree to follow at all times the safety protocols and instructions in the performance of my duties and responsibilities as a CRAB volunteer. I understand that safety is the number one priority of CRAB operations and as a volunteer providing sailing services to CRAB guests, it is my responsibility to follow the safety protocols and to report immediately to a CRAB Staff Member or Fleet Director any instance of a variance from the safety protocols by anyone (including self) at any time.

As a volunteer Skipper, Crew, or Support Staff I will strive to ensure that CRAB guests have a safe and enjoyable time learning how to sail on Chesapeake Bay.

Signature:  

Date:  