

AN ACT concerning transportation.

**Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:**

Section 5. The Boat Registration and Safety Act is amended by changing Section 5-18 as follows:

(625 ILCS 45/5-18) (from Ch. 95 1/2, par. 315-13)

Sec. 5-18. (a) Beginning on January 1, 2016, no person born on or after January 1, 1998, unless exempted by subsection (i), shall operate a motorboat with over 10 horse power unless that person has a valid Boating Safety Certificate issued by the Department of Natural Resources or an entity or organization recognized and approved by the Department.

(b) No person under 10 years of age may operate a motorboat.

(c) Prior to January 1, 2016, persons at least 10 years of age and less than 12 years of age may operate a motorboat with over 10 horse power only if they are accompanied on the motorboat and under the direct control of a parent or guardian or a person at least 18 years of age designated by a parent or guardian. Beginning on January 1, 2016, persons at least 10 years of age and less than 12 years of age may operate a motorboat with over 10 horse power only if the person is under the direct on-board supervision of a parent or guardian who

meets the requirements of subsection (a) or a person at least 18 years of age who meets the requirements of subsection (a) and is designated by a parent or guardian.

(d) Prior to January 1, 2016, persons at least 12 years of age and less than 18 years of age may operate a motorboat with over 10 horse power only if they are accompanied on the motorboat and under the direct control of a parent or guardian or a person at least 18 years of age designated by a parent or guardian, or the motorboat operator is in possession of a Boating Safety Certificate issued by the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Law Enforcement, authorizing the holder to operate motorboats. Beginning on January 1, 2016, persons at least 12 years and less than 18 years of age may operate a motorboat with over 10 horse power only if the person meets the requirements of subsection (a) or is under the direct on-board supervision of a parent or guardian who meets the requirements of subsection (a) or a person at least 18 years of age who meets the requirements of subsection (a) and is designated by a parent or guardian.

(e) Beginning January 1, 2016, the owner of a motorboat or a person given supervisory authority over a motorboat shall not permit a motorboat with over 10 horse power to be operated by a person who does not meet the Boating Safety Certificate requirements of this Section.

(f) Licensed boat liveries shall offer abbreviated operating and safety instruction covering core boat safety

rules to all renters, unless the renter can demonstrate compliance with the Illinois Boating Safety Certificate requirements of this Section, or is exempt under subsection (i) of this Section. A person who completes abbreviated operating and safety instruction may operate a motorboat rented from the livery providing the abbreviated operating and safety instruction without having a Boating Safety Certificate for up to one year from the date of instruction. The Department shall adopt rules to implement this subsection.

(g) Violations.

(1) A person who is operating a motorboat with over 10 horse power and is required to have a valid Boating Safety Certificate under the provisions of this Section shall present the certificate to a law enforcement officer upon request. Failure of the person to present the certificate upon request is a petty offense.

(2) A person who provides false or fictitious information in an application for a Boating Safety Certificate; or who alters, forges, counterfeits, or falsifies a Boating Safety Certificate; or who possesses a Boating Safety Certificate that has been altered, forged, counterfeited, or falsified is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(3) A person who loans or permits his or her Boating Safety Certificate to be used by another person or who operates a motorboat with over 10 horse power using a

Boating Safety Certificate that has not been issued to that person is guilty of a Class A misdemeanor.

(4) A violation of this Section done with the knowledge of a parent or guardian shall be deemed a violation by the parent or guardian and punishable under Section 11A-1.

(h) The Department of Natural Resources shall establish a program of instruction on boating safety, laws, regulations and administrative laws, and any other subject matter which might be related to the subject of general boat safety. The program shall be conducted by instructors certified by the Department of Natural Resources. The course of instruction for persons certified to teach boating safety shall be not less than 8 hours in length, and the Department shall have the authority to revoke the certification of any instructor who has demonstrated his inability to conduct courses on the subject matter. The Department of Natural Resources shall develop and provide a method for students to complete the program online. Students satisfactorily completing a program of not less than 8 hours in length shall receive a certificate of safety from the Department of Natural Resources. The Department may cooperate with schools, online vendors, private clubs and other organizations in offering boating safety courses throughout the State of Illinois.

The Department shall issue certificates of boating safety to persons 10 years of age or older successfully completing the prescribed course of instruction and passing such tests as may

be prescribed by the Department. The Department may charge each person who enrolls in a course of instruction a fee not to exceed \$5. If a fee is authorized by the Department, the Department shall authorize instructors conducting such courses meeting standards established by it to charge for the rental of facilities or for the cost of materials utilized in the course. Fees retained by the Department shall be utilized to defray a part of its expenses to operate the safety and accident reporting programs of the Department.

(i) A Boating Safety Certificate is not required by:

(1) a person who possesses a valid United States Coast Guard commercial vessel operator's license or a marine certificate issued by the Canadian government;

(2) a person employed by the United States, this State, another state, or a subdivision thereof while in performance of his or her official duties;

(3) a person who is not a resident, is temporarily using the waters of this State for a period not to exceed 90 days, and meets any applicable boating safety education requirements of his or her state of residency or possesses a Canadian Pleasure Craft Operator's Card;

(4) a person who is a resident of this State who has met the applicable boating safety education requirements of another state or possesses a Canadian Pleasure Craft Operator's Card;

(5) a person who has assumed operation of the motorboat

due to the illness or physical impairment of the operator, and is returning the motorboat or personal watercraft to shore in order to provide assistance or care for that operator;

(6) a person who is registered as a commercial fisherman or a person who is under the onboard direct supervision of the commercial fisherman while operating the commercial fisherman's vessel;

(7) a person who is serving or has qualified as a surface warfare officer or enlisted surface warfare specialist in the United States Navy;

(8) a person who has assumed operation of the motorboat for the purpose of completing a watercraft safety course approved by the Department, the U.S. Coast Guard, or the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators;

(9) a person using only an electric motor to propel the motorboat;

(10) a person operating a motorboat on private property; ~~or~~

(11) a person over the age of 12 years who holds a valid certificate issued by another state, a province of the Dominion of Canada, the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary or the United States Power Squadron need not obtain a certificate from the Department if the course content of the program in such other state, province or organization substantially meets that established by the

Department under this Section. A certificate issued by the Department or by another state, province of the Dominion of Canada or approved organization shall not constitute an operator's license, but shall certify only that the student has successfully passed a course in boating safety instruction; or -

(12) a person who is temporarily using the waters of this State for the purpose of participating in a boat racing event sanctioned by the Department of Natural Resources or authorized federal agency. The organizer or holder of the sanctioned event shall possess liability insurance for property damage and bodily injury or death with a minimum benefit of \$1,000,000 that shall remain in effect through the entirety of the event.

(j) The Department of Natural Resources shall adopt rules necessary to implement this Section. The Department of Natural Resources shall consult and coordinate with the boating public, professional organizations for recreational boating safety, and the boating retail, leasing, and dealer business community in the adoption of these rules.

(Source: P.A. 98-698, eff. 1-1-15; 99-78, eff. 7-20-15.)

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.