Risk Management and Emergency Response Plan

Updated April 2026

LOGO

me of Organization
Owner's Name
Address
Phone
Email
Website
ORCKA Membership #

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Overview of Organization and Scope of Services

Describe your organization and the types of services you provide.

What is your policy around Risk Management? Eg. We are aware that there are inherent risks in any of the services we provide. Our aim is to minimize these risks as much as possible through proper planning and supervision.

Instructor and/or Trip Leader Credentials

Include:

- Paddling Certification
    - appropriate instructor certification for courses, and ORCKA Trip Leader certification for trips
- First Aid and Rescue
    - appropriate level of first aid certification
    - appropriate level of Lifesaving certification
    - White Water Rescue Technician for moving water courses and trips
- Leadership Qualities and Training
    - leadership training, group dynamics management, etc.

Supervision Ratios

Include:

- Instructor:Participant
    - appropriate ratios for the particular ORCKA course
- Trip Leader:Participant
    - 1:8

Participant Registration

Include: the information you collect from your participants upon registration. You can put in an appendix a copy of your registration form, and the waivers you will use

- medical history and relevant considerations
- emergency contact
- participant experience, swimming ability, preparedness, etc.
- assumption of risk and responsibility, and waivers
- Compliance protocol - participants must sign the waiver and complete registration
- Record keeping in accordance with the Limitations Act (minimum 2 years; recommended 15 years). For minors count retention starting after they turn 18. Keep in mind that people can make claims for certain issues (like abuse) for many years so best to keep waivers & incident reports indefinitely (scan and save electronically)

Participant Preparation

Include: what information you provide to help them prepare for your course/trip. How do you provide it?

- pre-course or pre-trip paddling and tripping instruction
- clothing and footwear, tripping gear, participant checklist, etc.
- What to expect in the course or on the trip
- Inherent risks and **participant responsibilities** to minimize risk
- Provide venue-specific information such as the location of washrooms, out-of-bounds areas, muster points, access to potable water, etc.
- Inform clients of risks and discuss risk mitigation and responses relevant for the course/trip, venue and clients. I.e. – heat and cold injuries, wind, water temperature, dehydration, weather forecast, accidental capsizing, etc.

Safety Procedures

Include: identify the potential hazards participants may encounter in your particular courses or trips. And include your protocols or policies to mitigate these risks. Consider the following

- Awareness of site/trip hazards
  - kitchen, firepit, camp hygiene, lake or river hazards, washrooms, waste disposal
- Swimming protocol
  - buddy system, guarding, swim tests, wearing PFD etc.
- Nutrition and trip menu,
  - hydration, food preservation and preparation, water purification, wildlife management, etc.
- Personal Protective Equipment
  - Canadian approved Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's) will be fitted properly before entering canoes and worn at all times when on or near the water. Helmets will be worn when canoeing or swimming in moving water.
  - Clothes, Shoes, Wet or Dry Suit? Sunglasses, hat
- Environmental conditions
  - will be monitored to mitigate risks related to heat and cold injuries and weather-related dangers such as wind and thunderstorms; where will participants shelter?.
  - exposure to the elements
  - Severe weather policy – cancel/postpone/delay course - what to do?
- Abuse prevention protocol
  - expectations of instructors and participants (consider putting Abuse Report form in appendix) Instructors and Trip Leaders will report any suspected or known acts of abuse.

Equipment

Include:

- All Transport Canada regulations will be met (PFDs, paddles, whistles, throw ropes, bailing bucket, and flashlights when required, helmut for white water, etc.)
- Equipment check and repair protocol
- Scheduled maintenance
- Course or trip repair kits

- First Aid kits (where are they kept?)
- Rescue gear
- Trip Leader's Kit (firestarter, emergency blanket, quick calories, logbook, etc.)

Course or Trip Plan

Include: instructions you give to instructors regarding course and site preparation, course schedule or Trip plan, incident reports, course/trip evaluations, documentation with participant info, etc.

- Course and site preparations
- Course schedule
- Trip plan (Float Plan) - who will it be left with? (consider including sample in appendix)
- Incident report (when to report and what to report - consider including sample incident report in an appendix)
- Where to keep documentation of participant info (medical conditions, medications, emergency contact, etc)
- Where are first aid kits kept?
- Emergency numbers for the area
- Feedback from participants at end of course/trip
- Communication plan (devices, check-ins, etc.)

Emergency Response Plan

Include:

- Participant emergency contact names and numbers,
- local access information for park superintendents
- Nearest medical facilities and phone numbers
- EMS and Search and Rescue numbers
- egress locations and routes
- Communication devices to be used
- Alternate routes
- Alternate leadership - protocol for transferring leadership responsibilities
- first-aid kit and manual [the components of a responsible first-aid kit are covered in wilderness first-aid accreditation]
- Evacuation plan, search and rescue (SAR)
- Documentation in advance, remote communications protocol
- Missing Person Protocols
- SAR instructions given to a responsible actor or organization, and integrated with national Search and Rescue Protocol
  Distress Alerting from national search and rescue secretariat

Incident Reporting

Include:

- Protocol for reporting an incident (who, when, what)
- Incident reporting form (consider putting in an appendix)
- ORCKA protocol for reporting potential abuse

Course/Trip Administration Requirements

Include:

- All courses and programs will be registered through the ORCKA Members portal before the start date
- Participants will be added to courses through the ORCKA system
- Participants will be marked in the system as passed
- OM can order the badges and cards or certificates through the ORCKA system
- All waivers, registration forms and incident reports will be stored securely
- OM will notify ORCKA office in the case of an incident and report sent to info@orcka.ca
- Participants will be informed about the abuse policy and instructed on how to submit a concern or report an incident to the Abuse Claims Coordinator (confidential@orcka.ca)

Agreement on ORCKA Position Statements

The following statements should be Included. You can include them in any of the preceding sections or make a summary at the end of the document.

- When offering ORCKA Programs the current policies and practices will be followed as stated in the appropriate Manual and Program Administration Document, and that the program will be led by current ORCKA Instructors certified in the appropriate discipline.
- Acknowledgement that there are risks involved in conducting ORCKA programming, and that the Organization works to minimize risks
- All applicable federal laws and Government Safety Regulations will be followed.
- Canadian approved Personal Floatation Devices will be worn by ORCKA program participants and instructors whenever in watercraft, when scouting rapids, when lining or tracking, or whenever there exists risk of water-related mishap. Helmets will be worn when canoeing or swimming in moving water.
- Registration documents [including A Statement of Risks, Assumption of Risks, and Release of Claims, and personal/medical information forms] will be completed and signed by ORCKA program participants and retained by your organization.
- An appropriate and responsible trip plan will be prepared for any applicable ORCKA programming.
- The Risk Management and Emergency Response Plan will be reviewed and updated annually
- ORCKA Organizational Members conduct ORCKA Programming by registering courses online and employing ORCKA Instructors in good standing
- ORCKA Instructors will have the appropriate, approved first aid or wilderness first aid and swimming qualifications as per the ORCKA program being provided

APPENDIX A - ORCKA Release of Liability, Waiver (>18 years)

orcka_waiver >18 years

APPENDIX B - ORCKA Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk Agreement

Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk <18yrs

APPENDIX C - Course Registration & Medical Form

What to include: Participant Information and Medical Form Information

ORCKA Sample Registration and Medical Form

APPENDIX D - Incident Reporting Form

Example Accident/Incident Report Form

APPENDIX E - Abuse Reporting Form

Abuse Reporting Form

APPENDIX F - Trip or Float Plan

Example FLOAT & TRIP PLAN