

## RIVER RATS MEMBER GUIDE TO OPERATIONS

### ELIGIBILITY AND USMS MEMBERSHIP

- All participants (swimmers and paddlers) must be registered with U.S. Masters Swimming or have provided a completed [30-day trial form](#) to the Safety Coordinator prior to any swim. Email [tothedocks@gmail.com](mailto:tothedocks@gmail.com) for detailed registration instructions if needed.
- All participants in any official River Rats swim acknowledge that they have read, understood, and signed the USMS Participation Waiver and Release of Liability, Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement upon registration with U.S. Masters Swimming.
- All participants must also complete the River Rats member information form available on [kylmsc.org/rats](http://kylmsc.org/rats). It is imperative that we have medical and contact information for every participant (swimmers and paddlers) on file in the event of an emergency.
- All participants are subject to season dues or drop-in fees as follows:
  - **Summer Dues — \$100.00**
  - **Drop-In Fee — \$10 Sundays, \$20 holidays**

### OFFICIAL SWIMS

- River Rats, Inc. only recognizes open water workouts on Sunday mornings and three other holiday swims as official.
- All official swims are supervised by multiple registered observers on paddle craft under the direction of one predetermined Safety Coordinator.
- Official swims are covered by [U.S. Masters Swimming insurance policies](#).

### UNOFFICIAL SWIMS

- River Rats, Inc. does not recognize any situation that differs from what is described above.
- Unofficial swims are not recognized by U.S. Masters Swimming or any of their insurance policies.

### SAFETY

Please abide by the following MANDATORY safety procedures:

- All swimmers must be present for the safety and water conditions briefing before participating in the swim.
- All swimmers must be present for the official headcount before participating in the swim.

- All swimmers must sign or initial the official IN/OUT form, acknowledging both the time they entered and exited the water, ability group, and willingness to comply with the rules and regulations of the River Rats open water workout group.
- All swimmers must be honest in identifying their swimming abilities when determining swimmer and kayaker groups for an official River Rats swim.
- All swimmers are required to use an open water buoy or similar flotation device during an official River Rats swim.
- All swimmers are encouraged to wear bright caps to aid paddlers in their supervision.
- Swimmers may not enter the water until the Safety Coordinator has indicated it is safe to do so.
- All paddlers must use a life jacket or other Coast Guard approved flotation device while providing surveillance for an official River Rats swim.
- No swimmer may leave the line of sight of a USMS-registered individual on a paddle craft or dock during an official River Rats swim.
- All paddlers must exchange contact information (cell phone numbers) before the start of every swim. It should be noted who does not have a cell phone on their craft when deciding kayak and swim groups.
- All paddlers should wear or have onboard a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket.
- It is recommended that one paddler from each swimmer group have a first aid kit on board during an official River Rats swim.

## **LOUISVILLE COMMUNITY BOATHOUSE**

River Rats, Inc. holds a group membership at the Louisville Community Boathouse at 1325 River Road for its members **during recognized practices only**. This means River Rats members are permitted to use the boathouse and its restroom facilities before, during, and after recognized swims only.

Individuals wishing to use the boathouse facilities at any other time should contact Scott Whittemore at (502-387-1426) to inquire about individual membership.

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The River Rats board of directors reserves the right to edit all of the above information and rules and regulations at any time by a majority vote. Members of the River Rats will be served ample notice of changes to these rules and regulations via email, Messenger, and the team website, [kylmsc.org/rats](http://kylmsc.org/rats).