



The Florida State University
Diving Control Board

EXPOSURE CONTROL GUIDELINES FOR DIVING OPERATIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The following are considered mandatory requirements as of January 1, 2021. Additional measures may be required based upon specific characteristics of the planned operations, environmental conditions, current community public health situation, or further guidance from the University.

General Guidelines

- All dive team members must be tested for COVID-19 and quarantine while awaiting test results.
- Eligibility remains in place for a maximum of seven (7) days following test results.
- During the period of field research, divers must remain in quarantine.
- Valid documentation for COVID-19 testing must be on file with the Diving Safety Officer.
- Facial coverings must be used at all times when two or more people are present in the same area and interaction among personnel is possible.
- Social distancing should be maintained during all surface activities including vehicular and vessel transport.
- The applications of social units and/or a quarantine process will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Personnel Guidelines

- In the interest of the dive team, it is expected that any diver who feels ill or has reasonable cause to believe they have been exposed to the Corona SARS-CoV-2 virus will exclude her/himself from diving operations.
- If a diver has reasonable cause to believe they have been exposed to Corona SARS-CoV-2, they should quarantine for 14 days and monitor for symptoms.
- If a diver has symptoms consistent with COVID-19, they should be tested and must self-isolate until they have been symptom free for 10 days. At the end of the 10-day period, the diver should consider a medical evaluation to determine if additional testing is needed to return to diving.
- If a diver has tested positive for COVID-19 they must self-isolate until they have been symptom free for 10 days. At the end of the 10-day period, the diver should consider a medical evaluation to determine if additional testing is needed to return to diving.
- A diver who tests positive and is cleared to return to diving may omit testing procedures for a period of 90 days from the date of the positive test. If the diver becomes symptomatic again, a medical evaluation should be considered.
- During the period of diving, divers must refrain from unnecessary risks of exposure including avoiding crowded places and gatherings where it is difficult to maintain social distancing and/or where people are not wearing masks. Failure to refrain from unnecessary risks of exposure will result in suspension of diving eligibility.
- To limit the potential spread of COVID-19 among active divers, dive teams and auxiliary personnel should be kept to a minimum (on a single dive trip and from trip to trip for a particular research project).

Dive Briefings and Equipment Checks

- Primary dive team operational planning and briefing should be conducted prior to departing for the dive site.
- On site discussions and prep should be minimized to essential items.
- Each diver should only handle and test their own equipment.
- In place of traditional buddy checks, each diver should perform functional testing and demonstrate operation of his/her equipment while observed by the buddy.
- All divers must take care not to transfer saliva from breathing equipment to other persons or surfaces.

Rescue Guidelines

- If air sharing is required, refrain from sharing a single second stage unless to refrain would result in severe injury or loss of life.
- Diver assist, rescues, and first aid must be approached with extra safety precautions in mind.
- Diver rescue training must be conducted without non-essential sharing of equipment or person to person contact.

Equipment

- Dive equipment and any personal or scientific auxiliary equipment used should be dedicated to an individual diver for the duration of the diving operation.
- All dive equipment and vehicles and vessels used should be properly disinfected before and after use.
- Hand sanitizing provisions should be provided by the lead diver and made available at the dive site.
- Each diver is responsible for disinfecting his/her own equipment. All regulator second stages and BC oral inflators must
 - receive an initial freshwater rinse, then be immersed in a CDC-approved bleach solution or other EPA-approved disinfectant after return to shore,
 - remaining wetted for at least 5 minutes, and then rinsed before drying.
- Equipment used by one diver will not be used by a different diver without an intervening period of at least 7 days and a re-disinfection prior to use.
- O₂ kits, first aid supplies, and any other gear that may have been contaminated should be disinfected or safely disposed after use.

Dive Logging Procedures

- Upon completion of a day's operations, the Lead Diver must communicate a log of the day's dive to the DSO, including any breaches of exposure protocols.