

# **BBYRA COVID-19 Update**

## **On-Line Conversation**

**04/11/2020**

I want to thank Assemblyman Ned Thomson, of the 30<sup>th</sup> Legislative District, for bringing the latest Covid-19 information to us this past Saturday and answering numerous questions from Club Commodores, BBYRA current/past officers and other representatives. I also want to thank everyone who attended this on-line meeting for asking great questions, some of which can't be answered at the current time, but will need to be addressed before our organizations have a clear path forward. Hopefully, these bi-weekly meetings will eventually show us that path.

This communication is intended to provide a summary of what my takeaways are from the meeting on Saturday, April 11. I am not a lawyer, so my opinions here carries no weight and should not be taken as legal advice. My views here should also not be taken as instructions to the clubs. I have no such power. The BBYRA is collecting information and discussing the effects of this crisis the same way all of you are and hopefully, by sharing this, we can help each other.

To simplify my takeaways, the State of NJ has taken two actions that directly affect the clubs:

- 1) All social club operations have been suspended by the state
- 2) All non-essential travel is banned

The following are some of the aspects of the clubs being closed;

- 1) The club must be closed to members for access and services normally part of the club
  - a) No bathroom use
  - b) No locker access
  - c) No use of the facility to launch and recover boats including lifts.
  - d) No events, no building access except as outlined in "exceptions"
- 2) Exceptions to the above are provided for:
  - a) Maintenance and repair at the club. Social distancing must be observed.
  - b) Construction projects already started. Social distancing must be observed.
  - c) Employee access for any state sanctioned activity such as take-out food service.

Most other questions were directed to the non-essential travel ban as the governing principle:

- 3) Traveling to or using a pleasure craft is non-essential travel.
- 4) Traveling to a boat yard or marina to work on your boat is non-essential travel.
- 5) Visiting your club to enjoy the view is non-essential travel.

There is a conflicting State exception that allows “engaging in outdoor activities” as long as social distancing requirements are observed. This could be taken to mean providing access to and using boats for pleasure is allowed if other restrictions are observed. That is dependent on how “outdoor activities” is defined. Also, all parks and boardwalks are closed.

I believe clubs are officially closed through May and that may be officially extended soon, possibly through June. There is a significant chance of the restrictions eventually extending into July and beyond. At the State level, Clubs are low on the priority list for return to normal operation.

Junior Sailing falls into the same category as summer camps. It is unlikely that Junior Sailing will not be at least partially affected by the restrictions. Reopening this type of activity is also low on the priority list for the State.

NJ is considering an outright ban on pleasure boating. A move that is currently in effect in Maryland. We may hear more about this soon.

Enforcement of restrictions is up to local authorities. As more abuses of restrictions become apparent it is likely that enforcement will increase. Fines for not adhering to restrictions can run \$1000 or more.

That is all the bad news I gleaned from this meeting. The good news, the acceleration of cases has started to level off and we may see a consistent downward trend soon. If so, future meetings are more likely to give us more actionable information.

I realize that some may have different take-aways from the meeting, but the above was mine for what it’s worth.

Please be safe and stay well.

Regards.

Mark Masur

BBYRA Commodore

