

OKLAHOMA HIGH SCHOOL

FISHING RULES

1. Interpretation & Enforcement

- These rules will remain in effect for all seasons and are subject to enforcement by the tournament director only.
 - **All local, state, and federal laws must be followed**, including boating laws.
 - The tournament director has sole authority over rule interpretation and enforcement. All decisions made by the director are final and cannot be appealed.
 - All student anglers, boat captains, and team advisors are required to report any known or suspected rule violations to the tournament director **immediately**.
 - Failure to report violations may result in disqualification.
 - Penalties for rule violations may include:
 - Disqualification from the current event
 - Suspension from future tournaments
 - Any other action deemed appropriate by the tournament director (Fines)
 - **Protests** must be submitted in writing **within 30 minutes** of check-in for the final flight of the tournament day.
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2. Tournaments

- Regular season tournaments will be **single-day events held on Sundays**.
 - The **Championship tournament** will be a **two-day event**, held on **Saturday and Sunday**.
 - Tournament cancellations or rescheduling are at the **discretion of the tournament director** and may include additional two-day events during the regular season.
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3. Participation & Eligibility

- High School Division Open to students in **grades 9–12**.
- **One (1)** student from **grade 7 or 8** may participate per team.
- Junior Division open to K - 8th grade.
- Teams must consist of **two student anglers** and **one adult coach/boat captain**.
- In accordance with the Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2017, **three individuals must be present in the boat at all times**.
- **Fishing alone is not permitted during competition**.

Exception:

- In the event of a **verifiable emergency**, a tournament official **may** allow an **observer** (*see rule 30*) to join the team in place of the missing angler. The observer may not fish. This exception may be granted by the tournament director at their discretion, including championships.
- **Substitute Partner Policy:**
In the event of an emergency or if a participant is unable to fish with their assigned partner — including but not limited to reasons such as illness, family obligations, or scheduling conflicts (e.g., baseball games) — the team may find a substitute partner for that event. All substitute participants must be approved in advance by the Tournament Director and must meet all membership requirements.
- **OKHSF Junior/High School Mixed Team Policy**

OKHSF will allow **Junior anglers under 7th grade** to fish with a **High School partner** under the following conditions:

- The team will compete **in the High School Division**.
- The team will **not** be eligible to qualify for **SAF or MLF events**.
- The team will **not** earn points toward **OKHSF Angler of the Year (AOY)** standings in either the High School or Junior divisions.
- They **will be eligible to win** OKHSF tournament awards and trophies at the events they compete in.

By participating under this format, both anglers acknowledge and accept that this arrangement is for experience and participation only, with **no qualification for SAF National / World Finals, Junior Worlds or OKHSF AOY implications**.

Team Structure:

- A team consists of a **team captain and a teammate**.
- If a team dissolves during the season, the captain may **replace their teammate** with **prior approval** from the tournament director.
- Points and awards are retained by the original team captain or may be dissolved by the tournament director at their discretion.
- Unapproved changes to team composition may result in classification as a **new team**, and all points will reset.
- Teams may **forfeit National Championship or Junior World qualification**, in which case the next eligible team will be offered the opportunity.

Additional Requirements:

- All participants must be **Student Angler Federation and OKHSF memberships**.
- A **\$20 late fee** applies to on-site registrations.
- **Minors must have a parent/guardian signature** on the entry/release form.
- Anglers must possess a **valid fishing license**, if required by law, and **proof of current school enrollment** or grade level.
- Random checks will be conducted. Failure to present valid documentation when requested may result in disqualification.
- All contestants must comply with applicable laws; violations may lead to disqualification.
- Oklahoma High School Fishing reserves the right to **review and reject team names** for appropriateness.

- There is **no limit** to the number of teams from each school or club.
 - Accepted teams will receive confirmation via **email**.
 - Tournament officials reserve the right to reject any application **for any reason**.
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4. Purchasing of Information

- Within **10 days** of any tournament, the following actions are strictly prohibited by anglers, coaches, captains, or team representatives:
 - **Buying, trading, or bartering for fishing information**, including GPS coordinates (except from public, commercially available sources)
 - **Hiring or receiving guidance** from fishing guides on tournament waters
 - **Paying captains** for services beyond fuel and travel costs
- Boat captains **may be reimbursed for actual expenses only**, such as fuel and travel—but **may not be paid** for their time or fishing knowledge.
- Team representatives, including parents, **may not purchase or trade for fishing locations** from any outside source.

5. Points System

- Tournament points are awarded as follows:
 - **1st place:** 500 points
 - **2nd place:** 499 points
 - **3rd place:** 498 points
 - And so on, decreasing by one point per place.
 - Teams that **do not weigh in fish** will receive **20 points less** than the last team that successfully weighed in fish.
 - At the tournament directors discretion: Teams that **fail to return their key fob** will receive **zero (0) points** for that event and **may be disqualified from the next tournament and possible fines**.
 - Once Team or Angler of the Year (TOY/AOY) points are posted on the website, teams must report any discrepancies to the tournament director by **email** at OKHSfishing@gmail.com.
 - Corrections must be submitted **before the start of the next tournament**.
 - Once the next event has started, **no previous points will be adjusted**.
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6. Off-Limits, Practice & Competition Rules

General Off-Limits Guidelines

- There is **no official off-limits period** prior to the start of **onsite registration** unless otherwise stated.
- If **no onsite registration** is held, **no one** (contestants, coaches, or boat captains) may be on the water after **6:00 PM the day before the tournament**.
- The **Championship Tournament** has special off-limits:

- For the OKHSF Championship Tournament waters are **off-limits from Monday through Thursday** of the same week leading up to the event.

Practice Regulations (Within 10 Days of Tournament)

- **Prohibited:**
 - Fishing with, hiring, or bartering with **any guide** who has worked on the tournament waters **within the past 12 months** unless they are the **parent or legal guardian** of a participating contestant.
 - Written legal proof may be required.
 - Practicing with **anyone except:**
 - A confirmed SAF member in the tournament
 - A contestant's coach or boat captain
 - Immediate family (parent, sibling, or grandparent) who meets guide eligibility
 - A registered participant in another **TBF or MLF** event happening at the same time
 - Receiving or soliciting fishing information **from non-participants**
 - Following non-contestant boats or "hole sitting"
 - Placing markers, brush, chum, or physical fish attractors in tournament waters
 - **Using drones or flying over the lake** to locate fish or structure
- **Permitted (with restrictions):**
 - Testing equipment on tournament waters **after registration begins** may be allowed, but only with **prior approval** from the tournament director.
 - Receiving information from:
 - **Other registered contestants**
 - **Publicly available sources** (e.g., official MLF/TBF weigh-ins or general access websites)
 - **Quasi-public or private groups** (e.g., group chats, closed Facebook groups) are **not considered public sources**.

During Competition Days

- No placing of brush, attractors, or chum is allowed.
- No non-contestants or unapproved individuals are allowed in boats (except approved media or officials).
- Violations of these rules may result in **disqualification**.

Championship Qualification

- In order to qualify for the two-day OKHSF Championship, a team must compete in at least two (2) regular season events from either the Northern Trail, Southern Trail, or a combination of both trails.
 - The SAF State Championship will count as one (1) qualifying event toward Championship eligibility.
 - All regular season rules apply, including special Championship off-limits regulations outlined in (Rule 6).
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7. Registration & Pre-Tournament Meeting

Registration

- All registrations must be completed **online, by phone, or by mail** before the event deadline:
 - **11:59 PM on the Thursday prior** to the tournament.
- **Late entries** will be accepted until:
 - **10:00 PM on Saturday**, or
 - **1 hour before official check-in**, whichever is earlier.
- A **\$20 late fee per team** applies and will be collected during check-in.
- Tournament entry fees must be paid **by cash or check** at the designated rate per team (TBD).
 - If paying by credit card, a surcharge will be added to cover processing fees.
- **Unpaid fees must be received** by the OKHSF office before the tournament begins. **No exceptions.**
- **Buy-ins are not allowed.** Entry fees are non-refundable unless a **case-by-case exception** is granted by the tournament director.
- Teams who fail to fish after entering a tournament **may forfeit their entry fee.**

Check-In Requirements

- Both **student anglers and boat captains** must check in at the designated site during the scheduled times.
 - Teams arriving **more than 15 minutes late** without prior notice may be **disqualified.**

Pre-Tournament Meetings

- Attendance at the pre-tournament meeting is **mandatory** for all anglers and boat captains, unless prior approval is given.
- These meetings will be held at the **time and location specified in the tournament confirmation.**
- **Virtual meetings** may be used in place of in-person gatherings when needed.
- Teams who **miss the meeting without approval** will not be allowed to compete.

8. Boat Assignments

- **Boat (takeoff) order** is determined by tournament officials.
 - Most events use a **random draw.**
 - Some may be based on **date/time of entry** or **Angler of the Year (AOY) points.**
 - **Onsite entries** will be assigned the **last available boat numbers** in order of arrival and may be required to check in first.
 - Each team **must be accompanied** on the water by a **coach or boat captain**, who:
 - **Provides the boat**
 - **Is not permitted to fish**
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9. Tournament Awards

- Awards will be distributed based on **one place per every seven (7) entrants**.
 - **Trophies and plaques** will be awarded for:
 - **1st–3rd place**
 - **Big Bass**
 - **Award quantity may vary** depending on total participation.
 - Prizes must be **claimed at the end of the tournament day** or:
 - Arrange someone to **pick up on your behalf**.
 - Unclaimed prizes will be **forfeited** if not picked up before the **next scheduled tournament** for that division.
 - Contact your tournament director to make alternative arrangements if needed.
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10. Safety

- **Safe boating practices must be followed at all times.**
- Everyone on board (contestants, coaches, boat captains) must:
 - **Wear a fastened USCG-approved chest-type PFD** whenever the **combustion engine is running and in gear**, from boat check to weigh-in.
 - Ensure the boat is equipped with an **emergency ignition shutoff device (kill switch)**, which must be **attached to the driver** when the combustion engine is running.
- When the boat is on plane or engine is in gear:
 - All persons must be **seated in manufacturer-recommended on-plane seating**.
 - A driver must be behind the wheel or tiller and **in full control**.
 - **Sitting on pedestal seats** is not allowed.
- **Contestants may not drive** when the combustion engine is running.
- Tournament days may be **shortened, postponed, or canceled** at the discretion of the tournament director for unsafe conditions.
- In dangerous weather, teams may **leave the boat and seek shelter**.
- Violations of safety rules may result in **disqualification**.
- **Boat Captain Responsibility & Safety Exceptions:**
It is the Boat Captain's responsibility to ensure the safety of their team at all times. We understand that in *extreme circumstances*, certain rules may need to be temporarily disregarded in order to protect the safety of the team or vessel. In such cases, the Tournament Director will review the situation and make a decision based on the specific circumstances and the intent to maintain safety.

11. Weather / Moving Events

- Tournament directors monitor weather leading up to each tournament in line with the **Severe Weather Policy** (found at the end of the rules).
- If **extreme weather** is expected, the event may be **canceled or postponed** by decision of the **Rules**

Board.

- The tournament director reserves the right to **override the Rules Board** in special situations.
 - **Boat captains are ultimately responsible** for the safety of themselves and student anglers.
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12. Trailering Events

- If trailering is allowed due to weather or other reasons, these rules apply:
 - All contestants must **pick up their key fob or team designation device** at the time and location designated by the tournament director.
 - Teams may **launch and load their boat only once** during the event unless changed by the tournament director.
 - **Fishing times and check-in times** will be provided prior to the tournament.
 - Participants are only permitted to fish in **navigable waters** that are **accessible by boat from the official tournament launch site**.
 - If an area **cannot be reached by boat via legal and connected tournament waters**, it is **off-limits** for fishing.
 - No portaging, walking, or transporting boats by land to access isolated waters is allowed.
 - **All standard rules remain in effect.**
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13. Sportsmanship

All participants (contestants, coaches, boat captains) must demonstrate:

- High standards of **sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation**
- Conduct that reflects positively on:
 - Themselves
 - TBF, SAF, MLF
 - Tournament sponsors
 - Their school
 - The sport of fishing

Unsportsmanlike Conduct Includes (but is not limited to):

- Violating any OKHSF rule
- Possessing or consuming alcohol or drugs during tournament-related activities
- Substance abuse or addiction
- Felony conviction within the past 36 months
- Suspension/disqualification/probation from any tournament organization
- Unsafe or unsportsmanlike boat operation

- Violating posted no-wake zones
- Publicly questioning the integrity of OKHSF, TBF, SAF, or MLF
- Sharing or posting content that harms the reputation of the organization or its officials/sponsors
- Any action that compromises safety, fair competition, or the integrity of the tournament

Tournament officials may **deny applications, disqualify contestants, or impose penalties** for conduct violations.

14. Boat Operation

- **Coaches or designated boat captains** must:
 - Be at least **19 years old**
 - **Reside in the same state** as the students **or** be an **immediate family member** (parent, sibling, grandparent)
- **Disqualifying Conditions:**
 - Being a paid guide (within the last 12 months) **on tournament waters**, unless the guide is a **parent or legal guardian** of a contestant
 - “Guide” = anyone paid for fishing knowledge or services
 - Written proof of guardianship may be required

Operation Guidelines:

- Contestants may **operate the trolling motor**
- Coaches and captains may assist with information, but **may not fish**
- **Use of mobile communication devices** (phones, tablets, radios, etc.) is **prohibited** for fishing communication during tournament hours, except:
 - Communicating with **lock masters**
 - Communicating with **tournament officials**
- **Permitted uses** during tournament hours include:
 - GPS
 - Mapping
 - Weather updates
 - Personal fishing notes
 - Barge/tide data
- **Social media may not be used** to share or receive fishing-related info
- In special cases (e.g., injury or emergency), the tournament director may allow a contestant to **withdraw and keep their weight** to that point.

15. Boat & Horsepower Regulations

- **Boat Requirements**

- Propeller-driven, **minimum 16 ft.** in length.
 - No barges or similarly cumbersome craft.
 - **Pontoons/tritoons** allowed if they meet every rule herein.
 - Must carry all **USCG-required safety equipment** and a **properly aerated live well** sized for a legal limit of bass.
 - **Horsepower Limits**
 - Outboard horsepower **must not exceed** the rating on the factory installed “**Maximum Capacities**” placard.
 - Boat and motor are subject to inspection; falsifying placard or entry form information may result in **disqualification** and possible future ineligibility.
 - **Additional Equipment Rules**
 - Fishing platforms must be **factory or permanently installed**—no portable platforms.
 - Fuel must be in **factory installed or securely fastened auxiliary tanks**; any refueling must come from a public retail pump.
 - **Generators** (other than solar/wind) are **prohibited** during tournament hours.
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16. Permitted Fishing Methods

- Fishing = rod in hand, lure on line, rod and reel only.
 - **Artificial lures only** (pork trailers & biodegradable soft baits allowed).
 - **Umbrella/Alabama rigs**: max **5 wires, 5 spinners, 5 lures, 3 hooks** (or stricter state limit).
 - **One rod** may be in use at a time.
 - **Trolling**—any combustion engine propulsion to move a lure—is **prohibited**.
 - Sight caught bass must be **hooked inside the mouth** and immediately shown to the coach/captain.
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17. Fishing Locations & Boundaries

- Fish anywhere within boundaries announced by the director **unless** marked “off limits,” “no boats,” etc., by authorities.
- Maintain **50 yd.** distance from any boat that is **anchored** (anchor or shallow water pole down, trolling motor up).
- **All fishing must be from the boat.** Anglers may not leave the boat to land fish or access water.
- Cutting vegetation, removing barricades, or using cables/ropes to force access = **disqualification**.
- Teams must **launch, fish, and return** by boat; no trailering mid day without director approval.
- **Equipment failure/emergency**: notify director ASAP; only three approved return methods:
 1. Tow with both anglers aboard
 2. One angler boards another team’s boat (with permission)
 3. Both anglers board an official rescue boat

- Teams returning by any other means **forfeit that day's catch**.
 - Teams must stay together and **within sight of their coach/captain** except brief restroom breaks.
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18. Checkpoints

- **One morning checkpoint** (boat check/launch) and **one afternoon check in**.
 - Missing either checkpoint = **disqualification**.
 - All fishing must stop once the team has checked in.
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19. Late Penalty

- **1 lb. per minute** deducted if a team is late to afternoon check-in.
 - **Over 15 minutes late** = day's weight **disqualified**.
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20. Live Fish Requirement

- Use aerated live well to keep bass healthy.
 - **8 oz.** penalty for each dead bass presented at weigh-in.
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21. Scoring

- **Species:** largemouth, spotted, redeye, or smallmouth bass only.
- **Limit:** 5 bass per team (or lower state/lake limit).
 - Must cull to 5 immediately upon catching a sixth fish.
 - Possessing over limit fish = **2 lb. penalty per extra bass**.
- **Minimum length:** 12 in. (or state/lake/tournament limit).
 - Short fish = **1 lb. penalty each**.
 - Fish weighed with clips attached = **4 oz. penalty per clip**.
- Once fish are presented at weigh-in, the catch is **final**. No returns to boat for forgotten fish.
- **Daily winner** = heaviest total weight.
- SAF National Championship and Junior World births are determined by the number of competing anglers in each division.
- **AOY (Angler of the Year):** highest season points earns an **SAF National Championship berth**.
- **OKHSF Two Day Championship winner** also earns a National Championship / Junior World berth (depending on anglers in the trail.)
- All SAF-registered teams may fish the **SAF State Championship** (counts toward AOY) and the **High School Fishing World Finals** (separate prize pool).

22. Tiebreakers *(see rule 24 for AOY/TOY)*

In both one-day and two-day tournament formats, ties will be broken using the following criteria, in order:

1. Total number of fish caught.
2. Total number of live fish.
3. *For one-day events*: Heaviest single fish weighed.
4. *For two-day events*: Heaviest single-day bag,
5. Finally by random draw (flip a coin) if necessary.

The number of fish and number of live fish will always be used first before applying additional tiebreaker methods based on the tournament format.

23. National Championship and Junior World Berths

- Distribution of SAF berths will be given as follows
 - AOY teams
 - OKHSF Championship placement (1st, 2nd ect.)

24. Angler of the Year – Tiebreakers

- In the event of a tie in Angler of the Year standings, the following tiebreaker criteria will be applied in order:
 1. Total weight throughout the entire season
 2. Total number of fish caught throughout the season.
 3. Total number of live fish weighed during the season.
 4. Random draw (flip a coin), if necessary.

25. DOUBLE QUALIFICATIONS

- If a team qualifies for SAF Nationals or Junior World through **both** the SAF State Championship and the OKHSF Championship (including Angler of the Year standings), **the berth awarded through the OKHSF Championship will be passed down to the next eligible team.**
- **SAF State qualifications take precedence** over OKHSF Championship qualifications.
- The passed-down berth **remains tied to the original placement** of the team that earned it.
- **Example**: If Team A qualifies through the SAF State Championship and later qualifies again at the OKHSF Championship as Team of the Year, the **next highest Team of the Year** (e.g., 2nd place TOY) will receive the OKHSF berth. The berth stays tied to TOY/AOY. same applies to the OKHSF Championship – berth stays tied to the OKHSF Championship and passed down to the next team in line.

Double Qualification in Both Trails

- The Northern Trail and Southern Trail will each be allocated a number of SAF National Championship berths to be given to the final Angler of the Year (AOY) standings and by the placing of a team in the OKHSF Championship (1st, 2nd, ect) which determined by participation. (*Rule 23*)
- A team may earn only one (1) automatic National Championship berth through qualification within the same season.
- If the same team qualifies for an automatic berth in both the Northern and Southern Trails, that team will

retain one (1) berth and the duplicate berth will roll down to the next highest eligible team from the trail with the greater average participation during the regular season.

- Average participation will be determined by the average number of boats entered per qualifying regular season event in each respective trail.

Tie Breaker for Double Qualification in Both Trails

- If both trails have the same average participation, the duplicate berth will roll down to the trail with the greater total cumulative season participation.
- If a tie still exists, the duplicate berth will roll down to the trail with the larger Championship event field.
- All berth allocations, eligibility determinations, and tie-break decisions will be finalized by tournament administration.

26. Logo Display & Media Coverage

Contestants, coaches, and boat captains may wear personal apparel. However, tournament officials reserve the right to prohibit any clothing they determine to be offensive or inappropriate, at their sole discretion.

27. Alcohol & Tobacco

Alcohol and tobacco logos are strictly prohibited on all apparel or equipment during tournament days. Additionally, the use of alcohol or tobacco products (including smoking and vaping) is not allowed by contestants, coaches, or boat captains during tournament hours, including the weigh-in.

28. Truth Verification Test

By signing the tournament entry form, all contestants and coaches agree to submit to a polygraph or voice stress analysis test if requested. Failure to pass this test will result in disqualification. Use of these tests, and interpretation of results, is at the sole discretion of tournament officials.

29. Insurance Requirements

All boats used in competition must carry liability insurance in reasonable coverage amounts. Proof of insurance must be on board and must cover all passengers. Random checks may be conducted. Failure to produce valid proof of insurance upon request may lead to disqualification.

30. Official Observers

Official Observers must follow these guidelines:

1. Must be at least 19 years old.
2. Are not permitted to fish.
3. May not provide any information (e.g., fishing spots, GPS data).
4. May not suggest baits, lures, or techniques.

5. May not assist with fish handling, netting, or culling.
 6. Are strictly observers and must not interfere in any way.
 7. May be subject to a polygraph test at the discretion of officials.
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31. Boat Captains

- Boat Captains must operate the boat engine at all times during competition and are the only individuals allowed to coach their student team. In the event of an emergency requiring departure from tournament waters, captains must notify the Tournament Director as soon as safely possible or inform another team. Captains are responsible for team safety and ensuring compliance with all tournament rules.
 - Boat Captains may be changed or substituted with a valid reason, provided approval is obtained from the tournament director. However, changes made solely due to a captain's lack of skill or familiarity with a specific body of water will not be considered a valid reason.
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32. Rule Violations & Appeals

The Tournament Director has final authority over all rule interpretations and enforcement. In certain cases, such as delays or cancellations, decisions may be delegated to a Rules Board composed of appointed adults over the age of 21. If you feel you must appeal: Appeals must be submitted in writing either via certified U.S. Mail or by email to **OKHSFishing@gmail.com** within one week of receiving notice of a rule violation or penalty. A written response will be provided in return. The response will most likely refer you to rule/article #1

33. Rule Clarifications and Decisions

When interpreting or enforcing rules, the Tournament Director or Rules Committee will be guided by the following principles:

- Consider the original purpose and intent of the rule.
- Prioritize the interests and fair treatment of the anglers.
- Allow anglers to continue fishing whenever reasonably possible.
- Disqualification should only be used as a last resort.

OKLAHOMA High School Bass Fishing Outdoor Event Severe Weather / Lightning Safety Policy

Purpose and Scope

The primary goal of OKHSF is to ensure the safety of all participants, including students, boat captains, spectators, and tournament staff, in the event of severe or dangerous weather.

This policy establishes:

- The role of designated weather watchers
- Monitoring of weather conditions using available technology
- Guidelines for delays, early stoppages, suspensions, resumptions, cancellations, and postponements
- Wind speed and lightning proximity thresholds
- Lightning safety strategies

Boat captains are ultimately responsible for their team's safety and are required to follow all weather safety protocols. Captains must keep phones charged and operational to receive real-time weather updates or tournament changes via text, phone call, or tournament app.

Weather Watchers

All participants serve as weather watchers. Each person should actively observe weather conditions and report any signs of severe weather. The Tournament Director or a designated official will communicate decisions regarding delays, suspensions, resumptions, early stoppages, or cancellations due to weather.

Monitoring Local Weather

Participants are encouraged to use:

- TV or internet radar reports
- Mobile weather apps (if service is available)
- NOAA weather alerts

Monitoring should occur before and during tournament hours.

Wind and Lightning Thresholds

- **Wind Speed:** A sustained wind speed of **20 mph or higher** may result in a delayed start, early stop, suspension, postponement, or cancellation. The decision will also consider the lake/venue and wind direction, as effects vary by location.
- **Lightning Distance:** Lightning can strike up to 20 miles away. If lightning is detected within **8 to 20 miles** of the tournament venue and moving toward tournament waters, the event may be delayed, suspended, or canceled.

Delays, Early Stops, Suspensions, Cancellations, and Postponements

- **Delays:** If severe weather is forecasted within **two hours** of the scheduled start, the tournament may be delayed. New start times will be communicated by the Tournament Director.
 - **Early Stop Times:** If weather is expected to worsen later in the day, the Tournament Director may issue an early stop time and notify all teams of check-in requirements.
 - **Suspensions & Resumptions:** If dangerous weather arises mid-tournament but is expected to pass, the event may be temporarily suspended. The Tournament Director may adjust the stop fishing and check-in times accordingly.
 - **Cancellations:** Decisions to cancel an event may be made as early as the **Friday before the tournament** or as late as **first cast**, depending on conditions. The Tournament Director, in consultation with the Rules Board, will make this call.
 - **Postponements:** Canceled tournaments will be rescheduled when possible. New dates will consider lake availability and avoid conflicts with major tournament trails.
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Lightning Safety Strategy

Preferred detection method: **Lightning detector devices** and **mobile radar apps**.

If technology fails or cell service is unavailable, the **Flash-to-Bang Method** may be used:

1. Count the seconds between the lightning flash and the sound of thunder.
 2. Divide by 5 to estimate the distance in miles.
 3. A count of 30 seconds or less (within 6 miles) is grounds for immediate safety action.
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Reminder: Boat captains and teams are always responsible for monitoring weather and prioritizing safety, even if no formal suspension or cancellation has been announced.