

23 June 2025

TMR Community Media Alert

New lifejacket laws to be enforced from 1 July

Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) and partner agencies will begin enforcing non-compliance with new lifejacket laws from 1 July 2025.

The new laws are aimed at making boating a safer activity for the more than 1 million Queenslanders with recreational boating licences, and their passengers.

The laws mandate that boaties must wear their lifejackets in certain high-risk situations and have been in place since 1 December 2024.

The new laws mean lifejackets must be worn at times of greatest risk, such as crossing designated coastal bars, and when boating alone or at night on smaller vessels.

They are also strongly focused on keeping children safe.

The new laws mandate that lifejackets must be worn when:

- boating alone, (or only with children under 12 years) on an open boat that is less than 4.8 metres in length whilst underway
- crossing a designated coastal bar on an open boat, and on an open area of a boat, of any length
- boating at night, that is between sunset and sunrise, on an open boat that is less than 4.8 metres in length whilst underway
- if you are under 12 years (aged 1 year or more but less than 12 years) in an open boat, or open area of a boat, of any length while underway.

Further, wearing a lifejacket is compulsory when crossing a coastal bar on certain craft in the style and risk profile of:

- Small sailing boats (such as lasers, herons)
- Pedal boats
- Rafts, including inflatable rafts
- Rowboats (excluding Surf Life Saving Australia Club Surfboats)
- Sea and surf kayaks.

Since the introduction of the new laws in December 2024, MSQ has focused on educating boaties about the new requirements rather than coming down hard on those not complying.

TMR Media Unit – media@tmr.qld.gov.au or phone (07) 3066 7060.

However, the grace period will end on 1 July, during the winter school holidays period, and MSQ is warning boaters that if they fail to comply after that date, they may be fined.

Fines for not complying with lifejacket laws will start at \$333.

Sixty-four people drowned in Queensland boating accidents over the five years between 2019 and 2023, and only five were wearing lifejackets.

For more information on the right type of life jacket for different activities, please visit Maritime Safety Queensland's [website](#).



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