

INFORMATION FOR SUPPORT PERSONS

Changes in this version – December 2024

No substantive changes.

Information

This guidance is intended for people who may be classified as a '*Support Person*' as defined in the Racing Rules of Sailing 2025–2029 (RRS). This definition includes a parent or guardian, a coach, trainer, manager, or team staff member, a medical or paramedical practitioner, a boat maintainer, a personal assistant to a disabled competitor or any other person working with, treating, or assisting the sailor in or preparing for a competition.

RRS 4 requires a *support person*, including a parent or guardian of a competitor that is racing, to agree to accept the rules. It requires also that the competitors agree that any *support person* is bound by the rules. Acceptance of the rules includes acceptance by a *support person* of any penalty imposed or other action taken under the rules, as well as acceptance of the protest, appeal and review systems provided for in the rules.

It also requires that competitors ensure that their support team are aware of the rules.

Additionally, the RYA has prescribed that 'Each competitor and boat owner shall ensure that their *support persons* comply with the *rules*.'

While racing, a boat is generally not permitted to receive help from an outside source, including from any *support person*. RRS 41 refers.

As well as providing a set of rules that apply on the water, the RRS requires every competitor and *support person*, at all times, not to breach good manners, good sportsmanship or indulge in unethical behaviour, and to avoid conduct that may bring the sport into disrepute.

The Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions (SIs) for a particular series of races may also place specific restrictions and requirements on the actions of both competitors and *support persons*, on and off the water. One example is the RYA 'Parent Declaration Form', which organising authorities are recommended to require for all competitors under 18 years old.

If the protest committee learns of a possible breach of a rule by a *support person* through any source, including the race committee, it may call a hearing under RRS 62.1 or consider action under RRS 69.2.

Examples of actions of a support person that could lead to a hearing are:

- Abusing or pressurising race officials, volunteers, other competitors or support persons (RRS 69 and/or SIs)
- Helping a competitor (unless ill, injured, in danger) after the preparatory signal (RRS 41)
- Failing to follow support boat regulations (SIs)
- Moving a competitor's boat away from any designated parking areas (SIs)
- Modification or substitution of measured equipment without authorisation (SIs)
- Tampering with or measuring other competitor's boats without permission (RRS 69)
- Using social media or any other medium to broadcast material that is unsportsmanlike or likely to bring the sport of sailing into disrepute (RRS 69)

Penalties

The RYA prescribes that the penalty for a breach of rule 4 shall be at the discretion of the protest committee. Possible penalties could be (but are not limited to) a warning for competitor and support person, exclusion from the competition venue, a scoring penalty for one or more races, disqualification from one or more races, or disqualification from the event.

For further information, the Racing Rules of Sailing, the RYA prescriptions and the RYA Racing Charter can be accessed from the RYA website at www.rya.org.uk/racingrules. The Notice of Race and SIs for a particular series are available from the race organisers.