

## Excerpt from The 2007 Florida Statutes

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[Title XXIV](#)  
VESSELS

[Chapter 327](#)  
VESSEL SAFETY

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### **327.39 Personal watercraft regulated.--**

(1) A person may not operate a personal watercraft unless each person riding on or being towed behind such vessel is wearing a type I, type II, type III, or type V personal flotation device, other than an inflatable device, approved by the United States Coast Guard.

(2) A person operating a personal watercraft equipped by the manufacturer with a lanyard type engine cutoff switch must attach such lanyard to his or her person, clothing, or personal flotation device as is appropriate for the specific vessel.

(3) A person may not operate a personal watercraft at any time between the hours from one-half hour after sunset to one-half hour before sunrise. However, an agent or employee of a fire or emergency rescue service is exempt from this subsection while performing his or her official duties.

(4) A personal watercraft must at all times be operated in a reasonable and prudent manner. Maneuvers which unreasonably or unnecessarily endanger life, limb, or property, including, but not limited to, weaving through congested vessel traffic, jumping the wake of another vessel unreasonably or unnecessarily close to such other vessel or when visibility around such other vessel is obstructed, and swerving at the last possible moment to avoid collision shall constitute reckless operation of a vessel, as provided in s. [327.33](#)(1). Any person operating a personal watercraft must comply with the provisions of s. [327.33](#).

(5) No person under the age of 14 shall operate any personal watercraft on the waters of this state.

(6)(a) It is unlawful for the owner of any personal watercraft or any person having charge over or control of a personal watercraft to authorize or knowingly permit the same to be operated by a person under 14 years of age in violation of this section.

(b)1. It is unlawful for the owner of any leased, hired, or rented personal watercraft, or any person having charge over or control of a leased, hired, or rented personal watercraft, to authorize or knowingly permit the watercraft to be operated by any person who has not received instruction in the safe handling of personal watercraft, in compliance with rules established by the commission.

2. Any person receiving instruction in the safe handling of personal watercraft pursuant to a program established by rule of the commission must provide the owner of, or person having charge of or control over, a leased, hired, or rented personal watercraft with a written statement attesting to the same.

3. The commission shall have the authority to establish rules pursuant to chapter 120 prescribing the instruction to be given, which shall take into account the nature and operational characteristics of personal watercraft and general principles and regulations

pertaining to boating safety.

(c) Any person who violates this subsection commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. [775.082](#) or s. [775.083](#).

(7) This section does not apply to a performer engaged in a professional exhibition or a person preparing to participate or participating in a regatta, race, marine parade, tournament, or exhibition held in compliance with s. [327.48](#).