

FL (Paddling) Scope of Practice

The Field Leader (Paddling) certification certifies a person to lead groups into a Low Risk Water Environment (see page 19) on a one day paddle providing the following conditions are met:

- 1) The Field Leader (Paddling) is being adequately supervised. Adequate supervision will typically mean:
 - a) The supervisor has 5 or more years of leadership experience, of which 2 years have been with participants of the same demographic as those the FL graduate is leading.
 - b) The performance of the FL leader is actively monitored through direct observation from time to time and there is a comprehensive trip reporting system in place.
 - c) The supervisor takes steps to ensure that the trip reporting system is capturing the information required to form a judgment of the leader's performance.
 - d) The supervisor is committed to creating participant centered programming.
- 2) The Field Leader (Paddling) has inspected every part of the terrain that their group will be using at least once in the previous 12 months.
- 3) The Field Leader (Paddling) has completed a recognized, relevant paddling skills certification and/or an industry standard in-house training program, which at minimum has certified that he/she can:
 1. control the kind of paddlecraft he/she will be using for your event
 2. perform an efficient rescue in the event of a capsized participant's paddlecraft, or his/her own paddlecraft during your eventor has otherwise demonstrated to a recognized paddling professional that he/she has these skills.

The following *restrictions* apply:

- 1) If The Field Leader (Paddling) is under the age of majority in the Province in which they are leading, they must be directly supervised by an adult who is also has the FL certification or higher. Directly supervised means that the adult is leading the group and is able to observe or at least be in verbal contact with the minor throughout the event.
- 2) If The Field Leader (Paddling) is a new leader, they must be directly supervised by an adult who also has the FL certification or higher until a qualified supervisor judges that they have attained the skill, experience, and judgment to become an equal partner in the leadership team, or leader of the event.

The following *extensions* apply:

- 1) The Field Leader (Paddling) may lead a group in a higher risk water environment where they hold a valid certificate for the risk factor that makes that Water Environment higher risk (than 'Low Risk Water Environment). All other risk factors must remain compatible with the descriptors for Low Risk Water Environments. For example: the Field Leader (Paddling) with a Paddle Canada Moving Water Instructor certification can lead 1 day trips in a moving water environment
- 2) The OCC is unable to vouch for any leader that leads in a Water Environment not covered by the above scope of practice. However, the OCC recognizes that there are many experienced outdoor leaders who do not have formal Water Environment leadership certification. In part this situation exists because accessible, affordable, and appropriate leadership certification has not been available. Collectively, these people are providing an excellent service to the community and the majority of them are competent to lead in the environments they do. However, such leaders should be aware that the most serious incidents occurring to custodial groups in water environments have typically happened to more experienced leaders who did not have water environment leadership specific certification. The OCC recommends that such leaders, and their supervisors, take the necessary steps to assure themselves that other recognized outdoor leaders with equivalent or higher qualifications agree that they have the necessary skill, experience and judgment to lead the paddle.