Admiralty Committee

FLORIDA STATUTORY MARITIME LAW UPDATE

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The following Florida statute regarding safety regulations, equipment and lighting requirements was added to Chapter 327, the Florida Vessel Safety Law.

§ 327.50. **[Effective 10/1/2022]** Vessel safety regulations; equipment and lighting requirements (1) (a) The owner and operator of every vessel on the waters of this state shall carry, store, maintain, and use safety equipment in accordance with current United States Coast Guard safety equipment requirements as specified in the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), unless expressly exempted by the commission.

(b) A person may not operate a vessel less than 26 feet in length on the waters of this state unless **every person under 6 years of age on board the vessel is wearing a personal flotation device** currently approved by the United States Coast Guard and used in accordance with the United States Coast Guard approval label while such vessel is underway. For the purpose of this section, **"underway" means at all times except when a vessel is anchored, moored, made fast to the shore, or aground.** (emphasis added)

(2) No person shall operate a vessel on the waters of this state unless said vessel is equipped with properly serviceable **lights and shapes required** by the navigation rules.

(3) The use of sirens or flashing, occulting, or revolving lights on any vessel is prohibited, except as expressly provided in the navigation rules or annexes thereto.

(4) The operator of a vessel used in the instruction of a water sport or activity must use an engine cutoff switch and wear an operative link to the switch when a person participating in the water sport or activity is in the water.

Note: Click on https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/navigation-rules-amalgamated to view and download a copy of the amalgamated International & U.S. Inland navigation rules.

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Chair

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