



Ontario Underwater Council Guest Diver Program (GDP)

Document History

<i> Ratification Date </i>	<i> Author </i>	<i> Remarks </i>
2003-12-04	Michael Briggs, President, OUC	Original
2006-07-18	Raimund Krob, President, OUC	To take effect 2006-07-24
2021-04-06	Barrileigh Price, Admin	Address Changes
2025-03-05	Cliff Adolf, Communications, OUC	Reflect price changes

Background

The Ontario Underwater Council (OUC) is Ontario’s recognized PSO (Provincial Sport Organization) representing the Province’s Scuba Diving Community.

The OUC’s priority is sport safety, and one of the ways in which OUC promotes safe diving is by encouraging scuba diving in organized groups (Clubs), as experience has shown that this is one of the safest and most enjoyable ways of diving.

To encourage safe diving in Clubs, the OUC maintains a Liability Insurance Policy for the exclusive benefit of its Member Clubs. This policy, which can be found on the OUC’s website at under Insurance, provides coverage on the condition that Clubs (and their members) adhere to safe diving practices such as:

- having the Executive of the Club sanction all the Club’s Dives
- having the Club notify the OUC in advance of the club-sanctioned dives.
- having certified scuba Instructors or Divemasters in charge of all club-sanctioned dives
- having Safety Divers ready to respond any time divers are in the water.
- ensuring Safety Equipment (First Aid, O2, etc.) is on-site and ready-to-go.
- taking and keeping records of all dives
- diving within no-decompression-diving limits
- adhering to the Buddy System

Within the scope of this policy and its attendant safe diving practices, the OUC has also implemented a “Guest Diver Program” (GDP). The purpose of this program is to allow Member Clubs to invite “Not-Yet-OUC-Club-Member Divers” to join them on their sanctioned dives. This promotes safe and enjoyable diving for all, and helps OUC Member Clubs attract new membership.

Reason for Revision

The primary reasons for the revision of the OUC’s Guest Diver Program are to stay current with changes in the way the OUC’s Liability Insurance Policy is administered and priced.



Ontario Underwater Council Guest Diver Program

1. Prior to the planned Sanctioned Dives, OUC Clubs who invite Guest Divers to join them (Hosting Clubs), must have their Guest Divers fill out the “OUC Club Membership Application Form” at the end of this document and must collect the applicable OUC Club Membership fees.
2. Within 5 business days of completion of Step 1, Hosting Clubs must forward the original copy of the completed and signed “OUC Club Membership” Forms, along with the OUC Club Membership Fees collected to OUC. OUC will process and treat the Membership Forms exactly like those for other Member Club Members.
3. Prior to the planned Sanctioned Dives, Hosting Clubs’ Instructors or Divemasters must satisfy themselves that their Guest Diver/s have the requisite abilities (physical, mental, equipment, etc.), training, and experience to participate in the planned Sanctioned Dives. Hosting Clubs’ Instructors or Divemasters may do so in various ways, including but not limited to, any/all of the following:
 - a. Inspecting their Guest Divers’ Logbooks,
 - b. Inspecting their Guest Divers’ Certification Levels
 - c. Diving with their Guest Diver/s
4. During the planned Sanctioned Dives, OUC Club Guest Divers must adhere to all the Terms and Conditions of the Liability Insurance Policy and generally accepted safe recreational scuba diving practices.

Disclaimer

Certain personal risks are inherent in most sports, and the sport of scuba diving is no exception. By engaging in the sport of scuba, you accept these risks. No amount of training, experience, equipment, policies, etc. can eliminate all personal risks, and the OUC, its Board Members, Regional Coordinators, and Members are not responsible for any losses, injury, or death sustained as a result of members or non-members accepting these risks.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Question:** My Club is an OUC Member Club, and I pay an annual Club Membership Fee per year. Out of this amount, my Membership Director remits payment to the OUC to cover my OUC Membership fee. Does this mean that the Guest Divers we invite to come on our Sanctioned Dives get to be full-fledged Members of my Club for only the price of the OUC dues?

Answer: No. The Guest Divers you invite to dive with your Club are only “Guest Divers” as far as your Club’s Membership Director is concerned. However, assuming they really enjoy diving with your Club and want to join, all they would have to pay your Membership Director to become full-fledged members of your Club is an additional club membership fee. Notwithstanding how your Club views your Guest Divers however, it is important to note that from a Liability Insurance perspective, the OUC views your Guest Divers as carded members of your Club.

2. **Question:** What if I’ve paid to be a Guest Diver of one OUC Member Club and am now invited to go diving with another, different, OUC Member Club. Do I have to pay again?

Answer: No, at least not as far as the OUC is concerned. Your OUC Club Membership is good for the entire calendar year in which you purchased it, and from an insurance perspective, you can dive with any OUC Member Club, subject to the same terms and conditions. You should note however that no two OUC clubs operate the same way, and many OUC Member Clubs may charge Guest Divers an additional fee even if the Guest Divers are Members in good standing of another OUC Member Club. It is important to note however that this additional fee has nothing to do with the OUC.

3. **Question:** How can my Club’s Guest Divers be covered under the Liability Insurance Policy if the OUC hasn’t yet received their applications and their fees?

Answer: In the context of membership fees and insurance premiums, OUC Member Clubs are considered as “Agents of OUC.” This means that as soon as your Guest Diver completes the OUC Club Membership Application Form and submits the form and associated fees to you, the “Hosting Club,” that Guest Diver is covered. The Hosting Club must however take care to remit the Membership Form and Fees to the OUC Office within 5 business days.

4. **Question:** I received my Scuba Certification through a local Scuba Retailer and I've been invited by an OUC Member Club to join them on one of their dives. I'm really looking forward to diving with them, but I'm not an OUC Member, I don't know anything about the OUC, and I'm not really sure I want to join you. Why do I have to become a member of the OUC just to be able to go out diving with an OUC Member Club?

Answer: In Ontario, unlike in other places in Canada and around the world, the sport of Scuba Diving is self-regulated. The OUC believes that self-regulation is a privilege to be earned, not a right. The OUC and its many Scuba Community Members (Scuba Retailers, Manufacturers, Certifying Agencies, and Divers) work very hard to earn that privilege every day, not just for OUC members, but for all members of the Ontario Scuba Community. Part of the work we do is to help put in place policies and processes that encourage safe Scuba Diving, such as affordable Liability Insurance Policy coverage, Scuba Diving Safety Awareness Programs, Safe Diving Standards and Practices, and 72-hour Scuba Incident Reports and Recommendations, to name but a few. By joining the OUC and by diving with an OUC Member Club, you commit to diving in a proven safe and enjoyable way. This directly benefits you, the Club, and the Ontario Scuba Community.

5. **Question:** What is a "Club-Sanctioned Dive"?

Answer: A "Club-Sanctioned Dive" is a Dive that is organized by an OUC Member Club, for OUC Club Members, and that is sanctioned by the Executive of that Club as meeting all the requirements as stipulated in the OUC's Liability Policy and generally accepted safe recreational scuba diving practices.

6. **Question:** Who helped in the revision of the OUC's Guest Diver Program (GDP)?

Answer: Members of the OUC Board and Regional Coordinator Team, OUC Member Clubs, and OUC Club Members, Presidents of three OUC Member Clubs were consulted and provided input to the new GDP. The revised GDP was ratified at the OUC Board Meeting of 2006-07-18.

7. **Question:** How long will it take for me to get my OUC Club membership card?

Answer: You should receive your OUC Club membership card in the mail within 4-6 weeks. If you do not receive it by then, then contact the Membership Director of the Club that hosted you to follow upon your behalf.



Ontario Underwater Council Club Membership Application Form

Please print clearly, complete in full, snap a photo, and forward to the OUC Membership Director.
membership@underwatercouncil.com

OUC Member Hosting Club information	
Name of Hosting Club	
Approved by:	
	<i>(e.g., club exec member, instructor, divemaster, etc.)</i>
Date:	
Guest Diver Information	
Full Legal Name:	
Common First Name:	
Last Name:	
Telephone: (cell phone)	
Email address:	
Membership Information	
OUC "Blue" Club Membership @ \$50	
OUC "Gold" Club Membership @ \$67	<i>(includes voting privileges)</i>
Are you already an OUC member @ \$0	<i>(no additional charge from OUC)</i>
If so, provide your OUC number	
Payment Options – On your payment, indicate "Guest Diver," and include club name	
eTransfer to payment@underwatercouncil.com	
Cheque via postal mail to: Peter Kalanderopoulos, OUC Finance, 3131 Bridletowne Circle, PH 7, Toronto, ON, M1W 2S9	