

Instructions for using MWPHRF's On-line System for Applications for Handicap Certificates

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Lake Michigan Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (LMPHRF) is now Midwest Performance Handicap Racing Fleet (MWPHRF)!

LMPHRF and the handicapping portion of Detroit Regional Yacht Racing Association (DRYA) have combined to form MWPHRF. Hopefully we'll have the kinks worked out shortly.

Our website, www.mwphrf.org, was built in 2019. It includes a web-based system for applying for handicap certificates as well as a repository for issued certificates.

Each boat owner is required to have a valid login-id on the website in order to apply for a handicap certificate on-line. If you had a valid LMPHRF or DRYA certificate, a login-id (username) was created for you. If you are new to MWPHRF then you will need to request a login-id by sending an e-mail to mwphrf@mwphrf.org.

LMPHRF folks should already know their logon-id. Logon-id's have been created for owners with recent DRYA PHRF certificates and that information will be sent to you shortly.

The login form is on the home page. If you are new to the system and we have provided you with an ID and password, the password will need to be changed upon initial login. When you enter your new password, it can be anything you want. There are no restrictions on length or special characters, and it will never expire.

The main menu includes an item called "Display a Handicap". This is available to anyone.

The main menu also includes "Obtain a Handicap Certificate". This menu item has a drop-down with two items within it. The first, also called "Obtain a Handicap Certificate" should be used for both new, renewal and update applications. (You must be logged-in on the site for this to work properly.)

The second item "Search for your Applications and Certificates" should be used to locate handicap certificates that have already been issued as well as applications for certificates that are in-progress and have not been completed. Likewise, you must be logged-in for this to work.

Once logged in, you can initiate a request for a new, renewal or update certificate. If you would like to obtain a handicap certificate for a new boat that has not had an LMPHRF or DRYA handicap certificate before, use the "New" option. If this is a request for a renewal, or if this is a boat that you purchased from someone who already had an LMPHRF or DRYA handicap certificate for it, you should use the "Renew" option (as handicaps are assigned to boats, not to owners). The update option is provided for mid-year updates to certificates, such as the purchase of a new sail.

The application process is relatively straight-forward. If you are applying for a renewal, you will be asked to locate and select the boat via its prior handicap certificate in the system. You can search on boat name, sail number or US Sailing number. In each of these cases, it must be an exact match. Note that the year for the search defaults to last year, but you can change that if needed.

Once you have started the application process you will be led through about a dozen pages that will ask you for information about yourself and about the boat. If this is a renewal, the system will do its best to pre-fill most of the information from last year's certificate. However, some of the questions are new and that data will need to be entered. Of course, this is your opportunity to correct information that might have been incorrect on the previous certificate. There are two buttons at the bottom of each page, one that will save the information you have entered and advance you to the next page, and another that will step you back a page in the process.

Each data item has a short label associated with it. If this is ambiguous, there is additional information about each field that can be accessed by simply hovering your mouse over the label. When you do this, a "tooltip" pop-up will appear. And, please note that MWPHRF uses the English units of measure (not metric).

Near the end of the application process you will have the opportunity to upload any supporting documentation in the form of PDF files. Only PDF files are supported, and files are limited to 2MB each. You can upload as many files as you like. An example would be a sail maker's certificate.

Note: You can exit the application process at any time and return to where you left off by using the "Search for your Applications and Certificates" menu item.

At the end of the application process, all of the data you have entered will be presented to you in table form. The information is broken into sections that relate to the individual data entry pages. You will be able to go back to any individual page to correct any errors.

When you are satisfied that all the information you have entered is complete and correct, proceed to the bottom of the display page where you will find a button that will allow you to pay the application fee and place the application for handicap into the work queue of the MWPHRF Regional Handicapper. The payment process is handled using commercial e-commerce software and all payments are processed through Stripe. None of your payment information is retained on the MWPHRF site and this process is encrypted and secure. (The "button" to send the request to Stripe says "Finish" and is located on the lower right-hand corner of the page.)

Because we hand control over to that other software, it will ask you for your mailing address information for when it communicates to Stripe. Once you have completed the transaction in Stripe, you must wait about ten seconds for Stripe to return you to our website. When control passes back to our site your payment will be posted and the regional handicapper will be notified that your application is ready for processing.

Note: There is a software bug between our software and Stripe. On some of the transactions the login information for our site is lost. The page will tell you if your payment transaction succeeded or failed. If it was successful, and you got logged out, you can leave the site and all is well. But if you want to continue with the site you will need to return to the home page and log back in.

Once the handicapper has reviewed your application, if he or she has questions or needs more information you will receive an e-mail explaining what clarification, correction or additional information is needed. If that happens, you will be able to use the "Search for your Applications..." menu item to locate your application and make the necessary updates. When the application is ready, and you are on the page that displays all of the information, you will find that the "Proceed to Payment" button at the bottom of the page has changed to "Send to Handicapper". Click it to re-submit.

When the handicapper is satisfied that your application is complete and correct, he or she will direct the system to issue your handicap certificate. You will be notified via e-mail once a handicap certificate has been issued. Certificates will be issued in PDF format and will be stored on the website. Use the "Search for your Applications and Certificates" to locate and download your new certificate once it has been issued.

We hope that this is a significant improvement over the paper process. Please understand that this process is new and will be improved in future years. We welcome your comments.