



### NATIONAL CRITERIA PROCESS

Blue Flag is an international award program which is operated at the national level by National Operators (NO) and evaluated by a National Jury to ensure national regulation is followed. The US NO held working groups on the four criteria categories to determine where criteria could be strengthened or modified to reflect significant but achievable objectives.

Please read the criteria and explanation document to get a full understanding of these highlights. **Red** text indicates criteria requirements which were modified or strengthened by the criteria working groups for US beaches.

### ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

#### CRITERION 12

- A Beach Management Committee should be established consisting of relevant stakeholders charged with ensuring compliance with all environmental management criteria; supporting the local operator; and conducting environmental control visits.

#### CRITERION 15

- Beaches, paths, and parking areas must be clean.
- Cleaning may be mechanical or manual.
- Cleaning must take into consideration flora, fauna, sensitive areas, and sensitive species.

#### CRITERION 13

- The beach must comply with all federal, state, local laws, regulations, and executive orders pertaining to the coastal zone.
- **The site, facilities, and management must comply with any applicable Findings of No Significant Impact or Records of Decision.**
- The applicant must provide written evidence that all buildings on the beach meet local building regulations.

#### CRITERION 16

- Algal vegetation and natural debris must be left on the beach unless it has become a hazard or hinders access of users.
- **Triggers for removal must be clearly identified in the beach management plan.**
- If and when removal occurs, it is recommended to focus on limited areas and disposal in environmentally friendly ways.

#### CRITERION 14

- Sensitive areas at or near the beach which require special management, must provide documentation of consultation on proper management and that the recommended management plan will be implemented.
- **Applicants should acquire a list of endangered or sensitive species with contacts for agencies or organizations responsible for their protection.**
- **Consultation with these agencies should take place to ensure management practices are in accordance with endangered and threatened species guidelines.**

#### CRITERION 17

- Trash cans must be available, in adequate numbers, and regularly maintained.
- It is recommended cans be made of environmentally friendly products

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### CRITERION 18

- Containers must be available for recycling if there is a local facility.
- Recycling should accommodate the collection and separation of as many different materials as possible.

### CRITERION 21

- Sewage or effluent from toilet facilities must not enter the ground or water untreated.

### CRITERION 24

- Equipment and structures at the site must be maintained.
- All construction work or hazardous structures must be fenced and construction not affect beach users.

### CRITERION 19

- The number of toilet facilities must be adequate for the number of beach visitors during the peak season and include sinks, soap, and towels or a dryer.
- Restroom facilities must be easily identifiable on the map.

### CRITERION 22

- Unauthorized camping, driving, and dumping must be prohibited.
- **Locations that allow driving on the beach during the Blue Flag season must properly manage the practice through permitting and enforcement.**
  - You may be asked to provide additional details in your application as to these practices.

### CRITERION 25

- If there is a sensitive habitat (coral reef or seagrass bed) located within 500 meters from any part of the site, a monitoring program must be established.
- An expert authority or organization must be consulted.

### CRITERION 20

- Toilet facilities must be kept clean at all times.
- Cleaning procedures should reflect the intensity of use.

### CRITERION 23

- Access to the beach by domestic animals is not allowed at the site applying for award.
- Domestic animals in parking areas, walkways, or promenades must be under control.

### CRITERION 26

- A sustainable means of transportation should be promoted such as encouraging public and collective transport; encouraging biking or bike rentals by increasing racks; supporting plans to organize traffic during peak times; and developing pedestrian access.



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