

Marine Vessel Offense Types¹

The table below is meant to be a quick-reference guide for common offenses involving marine vessels. An individual may be subject to exceptions found within the relevant statutes, and accordingly, may not be guilty or responsible for the offense when certain conditions are met. See each statute in its entirety for information on circumstances in which an offense may not apply.²

Statutory Reference	Offense Description	Offense Type
MCL 324.80108a	Prohibited operation of airboats near residences	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80122; R 281.1201-281.1209	Failure to comply with certificate of number and decal requirements	Civil Infraction
MCL 324.80133; R 281.1221-281.1226	Failure to render reasonable assistance at accident	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80134; R 281.1221-281.1226	Failure to exchange identification at accident	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80134a; R 281.1221-281.1226	Failure to stop at accident involving serious impairment of a body function or death until reasonable assistance has been provided and identification exchange has occurred	Felony
MCL 324.80135; R 281.1221-281.1226	Failure to report an accident	Misdemeanor

¹ See the Michigan Judicial Institute's [Recreational Vehicles Benchbook](#), Chapter 3, for more information on offenses and civil infractions involving marine vessels.

Statutory Reference	Offense Description	Offense Type
MCL 324.80141	Operation of motorboat by individuals 12 yrs of age or younger; failure to possess boating safety certificate or approved form of an electronic copy of boating safety certificate	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80142(1)	Operation of vessel without PFD - child under 6 yrs	State civil infraction
MCL 324.80143a	Operation of vessel without marine safety equipment requirements	State civil infraction
MCL 324.80144	Right-of-way requirements	State civil infraction
MCL 324.80145	Failure to operate vessel in careful and prudent manner and at appropriate speed; interfering with another's lawful use of the waters	State civil infraction
MCL 324.80146	Failure to operate vessel at proper speed	State civil infraction, unless violation of MCL 324.80146 constitutes reckless operation under MCL 324.80147
MCL 324.80147	Reckless operation of a vessel or contrivance	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80148	Operation of motorboat at more than slow-no wake speed under certain circumstances	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80149	Operation of vessel in areas not marked by other well-defined bodies of water	Generally misdemeanor; state civil infraction on Great Lakes, Lake St. Clair, or St. Clair River

²See [Summary of Michigan's Conservation-Related Laws](#).

Statutory Reference	Offense Description	Offense Type
MCL 324.80150	Operation of vessel in clearly-marked restricted area	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80151	Operation of vessel - towing a person (e.g. waterskiing) during prohibited times of the day	State civil infraction
MCL 324.80152	Operation of vessel - towing a person without a proper PFD, as required, or without another person capable of communicating about condition/needs of person being towed	State civil infraction
MCL 324.80153	Sitting, standing, or walking on portion of vessel not designed for such purpose	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80154	Intentionally interfering with operation of vessel	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80155	Failure to comply with underwater diving requirements	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80156 R 281.1231-281.1252	Equipment requirements — muffler or underwater exhaust system	State civil infraction/ Misdemeanor (depends on prior convictions)
MCL 324.80166	Failure to stop for peace officer upon direction to do so; providing misinformation to peace officer	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80172	Operation of vessel at immoderate speed, carelessly, recklessly, or negligently causing crippling or death	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80173	Felonious operation of vessel	Felony
MCL 324.80176(1)	Operating while under the influence, with unlawful blood alcohol content, or with any amount of certain controlled substances	Misdemeanor/ Felony (depends on prior convictions)

Statutory Reference	Offense Description	Offense Type
MCL 324.80176(2)	Knowingly allowing another who is under the influence, with unlawful blood alcohol content, with any amount of certain controlled substances, or who is visibly impaired to operate a motorboat	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80176(3)	Operating while visibly impaired	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80176(4)	Operating while under the influence, with unlawful blood alcohol content, with any amount of certain controlled substances, or while visibly impaired causing death	Felony
MCL 324.80176(5)	Operating while under the influence, with any amount of certain controlled substances, or while visibly impaired causing serious impairment of a body function	Felony
MCL 324.80176(6)	Operation of motorboat by a person who is less than 21 years of age who has any bodily alcohol content	Misdemeanor
MCL 324.80176(7)	Violation of § 80176(1), (3), (4), (5), or (6) when a person less than 16 years of age is occupying the motorboat	Misdemeanor/ felony (depending on underlying offense and prior convictions)
MCL 324.80196	Operation of vessel after vessel operating privileges have been suspended	Misdemeanor
MCL 750.479a	Willful failure to bring vessel to a stop after being directed to do so by uniformed officer by attempting to flee/elude	Felony