

A large sea turtle, likely a hawksbill, is swimming over a vibrant coral reef. The turtle's shell is dark with light-colored mottled patterns, and its flippers are also patterned. The water is clear and blue, and the coral reef below is colorful with various species of coral and sponges.

The Villages Scuba Club

Florida Dive Flag Regulations

WARREN GROSS 04 MARCH 2026

Florida Dive Flag Regulations

- [Florida Statute 327.331](#) defines requirements for boats and divers engaging in diving or boats near divers.
- Diving means swimming at or below the surface of the water while equipped with a mask and snorkel, or any other underwater breathing apparatus.
- All divers must prominently display a divers-down warning device in the area in which the diving occurs, other than when diving in an area customarily used for swimming only.
- Divers shall make reasonable efforts to stay within 100 feet of a divers-down warning device on rivers, inlets, and navigation channels.
- Divers must make reasonable efforts to stay within 300 feet of a divers-down warning device on all waters other than rivers, inlets, and navigation channels.

Divers-down warning device

- Divers-down flag, buoy, or other similar warning device that:
 - Contains a divers-down symbol that is at least 12 inches by 12 inches in dimension when displayed from the water
 - or at least 20 by 24 inches in dimension when displayed from a vessel;
 - Is prominently visible when in use.
- “Divers-down flag” means a flag that displays a divers-down symbol and:
 - Is square or rectangular and has a divers-down symbol on each face.
 - Has a wire, or other stiffener to ensure that it remains fully unfurled and extended in the absence of a wind or breeze.
- “Divers-down buoy” means a buoyant device which displays a divers-down symbol on three or four flat sides.



Boat Requirements



- A divers-down warning device displayed from a boat must:
 - Be displayed from the highest point of the boat so that their view is not obstructed in any direction
 - Must be at least 20 inches by 24 inches
 - Flags must have a stiffener to keep it extended (visible) when there is no wind.
 - A divers-down warning device may not be displayed once all divers are aboard.
- A person operating a vessel on a river, inlet, or navigation channel must make a reasonable effort to maintain a distance of at least 100 feet from any divers-down warning device.
- A person operating a vessel on waters other than a river, inlet, or navigation channel must make a reasonable effort to maintain a distance of at least 300 feet from any divers-down warning device.
- A vessel ... that approaches within 100 feet of a divers-down warning device on a river, inlet, or navigation channel, or within 300 feet of a divers-down warning device on waters other than a river, inlet, or navigation channel, must proceed no faster than is necessary to maintain headway and steerageway.

Devices that don't meet FL Dive Flag regulations



A Delayed Surface Marker Buoy (DSMB) is typically required by all charter boats and it is recommended that all divers carry at least one DSMB.

Comments? Questions?

*"Safety doesn't happen by accident."
— Jerry Smith*