

**Massachusetts**  
**PART I. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT**

**TITLE IX. TAXATION**

**CHAPTER 61B. CLASSIFICATION AND TAXATION OF RECREATIONAL LAND**

**Chapter 61B: Section 1. Recreational land and uses**

Section 1. Land not less than five acres in area shall be deemed to be recreational land if it is retained in substantially a natural, wild, or open condition or in a landscaped or pasture condition or in a managed forest condition under a certified forest management plan approved by and subject to procedures established by the state forester in such a manner as to allow to a significant extent the preservation of wildlife and other natural resources, including but not limited to, ground or surface water resources, clean air, vegetation, rare or endangered species, geologic features, high quality soils, and scenic resources. Land not less than five acres in area shall also be deemed to be recreational land which is devoted primarily to recreational use and which does not materially interfere with the environmental benefits which are derived from said land, and is available to the general public or to members of a non-profit organization including a corporation organized under chapter one hundred and eighty.

For the purpose of this chapter, the term recreational use shall be limited to the following: hiking, camping, nature study and observation, boating, golfing, non-commercial youth soccer, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, skiing, swimming, picnicking, private non-commercial flying, including hang gliding, archery, target shooting and commercial horseback riding and equine boarding.

Such recreational use shall not include horse racing, dog racing, or any sport normally undertaken in a stadium, gymnasium or similar structure.

**PART I. ADMINISTRATION OF THE GOVERNMENT**

**TITLE II. EXECUTIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH**

**CHAPTER 21. DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT**

**Chapter 21: Section 17C. Public use of land for recreational, conservation, scientific educational and other purposes; landowner's liability limited; exception**

*[ Subsection (a) effective until April 14, 2009. For text effective April 14, 2009, see below.]*

Section 17C. (a) Any person having an interest in land including the structures, buildings, and equipment attached to the land, including without limitation, wetlands, rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water, who lawfully permits the public to use such land for recreational, conservation, scientific, educational, environmental, ecological, research, religious, or charitable purposes without imposing a charge or fee therefor, or who leases such land for said purposes to the commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof or to any nonprofit corporation, trust or association, shall not be liable for personal injuries or property damage sustained by such members of the public, including without limitation a minor, while on said land in the absence of wilful, wanton, or reckless conduct by such person. Such permission shall not confer upon any member of the public using said land, including without limitation a minor, the status of an invitee or licensee to whom any duty would be owed by said person.

*[ Subsection (a) as amended by 2008, 513, Sec. 1 effective April 14, 2009. For text effective until April 14, 2009, see above.]*

(a) Any person having an interest in land including the structures, buildings, and equipment attached to the land, including without limitation, railroad and utility corridors, easements and rights of way, wetlands, rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, and other bodies of water, who lawfully permits the public to use such land for recreational, conservation, scientific, educational, environmental, ecological, research, religious, or charitable purposes without imposing a charge or fee therefor, or who leases such land for said purposes to the commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof or to any nonprofit corporation, trust or association, shall not be liable for personal injuries or property damage sustained by such members of the public, including without limitation a minor, while on said land in the absence of wilful, wanton, or reckless conduct by such person. Such permission shall not confer upon any member of the public using said land, including without limitation a minor, the status of an invitee or licensee to whom any duty would be owed by said person.

*[ Subsection (b) effective until April 14, 2009. For text effective April 14, 2009, see below.]*

(b) The liability of any person who imposes a charge or fee for the use of his land by the public for the purposes described in subsection (a) shall not be limited by any provision of this section. The term "person" as used in this section shall be deemed to include the person having an interest in the land, his agent, manager, or licensee and shall include without limitation, any governmental body, agency or instrumentality, nonprofit corporation, trust or association, and any director, officer, trustee, member, employee or agent thereof. A contribution or other voluntary payment not required to be made to use such land shall not be considered a charge or fee within the meaning of this section.

*[ Subsection (b) as amended by 2008, 513, Sec. 2 effective April 14, 2009. For text effective until April 14, 2009, see above.]*

(b) The liability of any person who imposes a charge or fee for the use of his land by the public for the purposes described in subsection (a) shall not be limited by any provision of this section. For the purposes of this section, "person" shall include the person having any interest in the land, his agent, manager or licensee and shall include, without limitation, any governmental body, agency or instrumentality, a nonprofit corporation, trust, association, corporation, company or other business organization and any director, officer, trustee, member, employee, authorized volunteer or agent thereof. For the purposes of this section, "structures, buildings and equipment" shall include any structure, building or equipment used by an electric company, transmission company, distribution company, gas company or railroad in the operation of its business. A contribution or other voluntary payment not required to be made to use such land shall not be considered a charge or fee within the meaning of this section.