

Outdoor Leader Handbook



Appalachian Mountain Club
Leadership Training Department

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<https://www.outdoors.org/volunteer/volunteer-resources?tab=3>

Feedback on this handbook is always welcome. Please address all questions and comments to: AMC's Leadership Training & Risk Management Department

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Introduction

Leadership is an association between an individual (the leader) and a group of people sharing a common interest or goal, with the leader guiding the group's behavior. One of a leader's most important functions is to influence the members of a group to work together for the benefit of all. During many outdoor activities, a group of people working together will be able to accomplish much more than one person acting alone—and the activity will be safer and more enjoyable. A leader's ultimate responsibility is to a group as a whole, rather than to himself or herself or to his or her friends.

When we address the issue of outdoor leadership, we must consider the characteristics of a leader and group members; the outdoor environment in which an activity takes place; and a group's objectives for an activity. Also, it is important to recognize that although an individual may be an effective leader in one situation, he or she may not be effective in others. For example, a person who can successfully lead a small, experienced group of day hikers in the White Mountains of New Hampshire might find it difficult to lead a large group of less experienced day hikers in Harriman State Park in New York (or vice versa).

Outdoor leadership skills can be developed and improved over time through a combination of self-study, formal training and experience. Leadership training workshops are offered frequently by volunteers and staff of the AMC. The trainings range between one-day, or weekend, trainings in each chapter to the 5-day Mountain Leadership School held in the White Mountain National Forest's backcountry each summer. Prospective leaders should start by co-leading trips with experienced leaders and by volunteering to "sweep" on these activities. (By sweeping, a leader will gain first-hand experience of the problems likely to occur in back of a group.) We also recommend prospective leaders work with a number of different leaders to familiarize themselves with a variety of leadership styles and techniques. After observing different styles, leaders can choose techniques that work best for them.

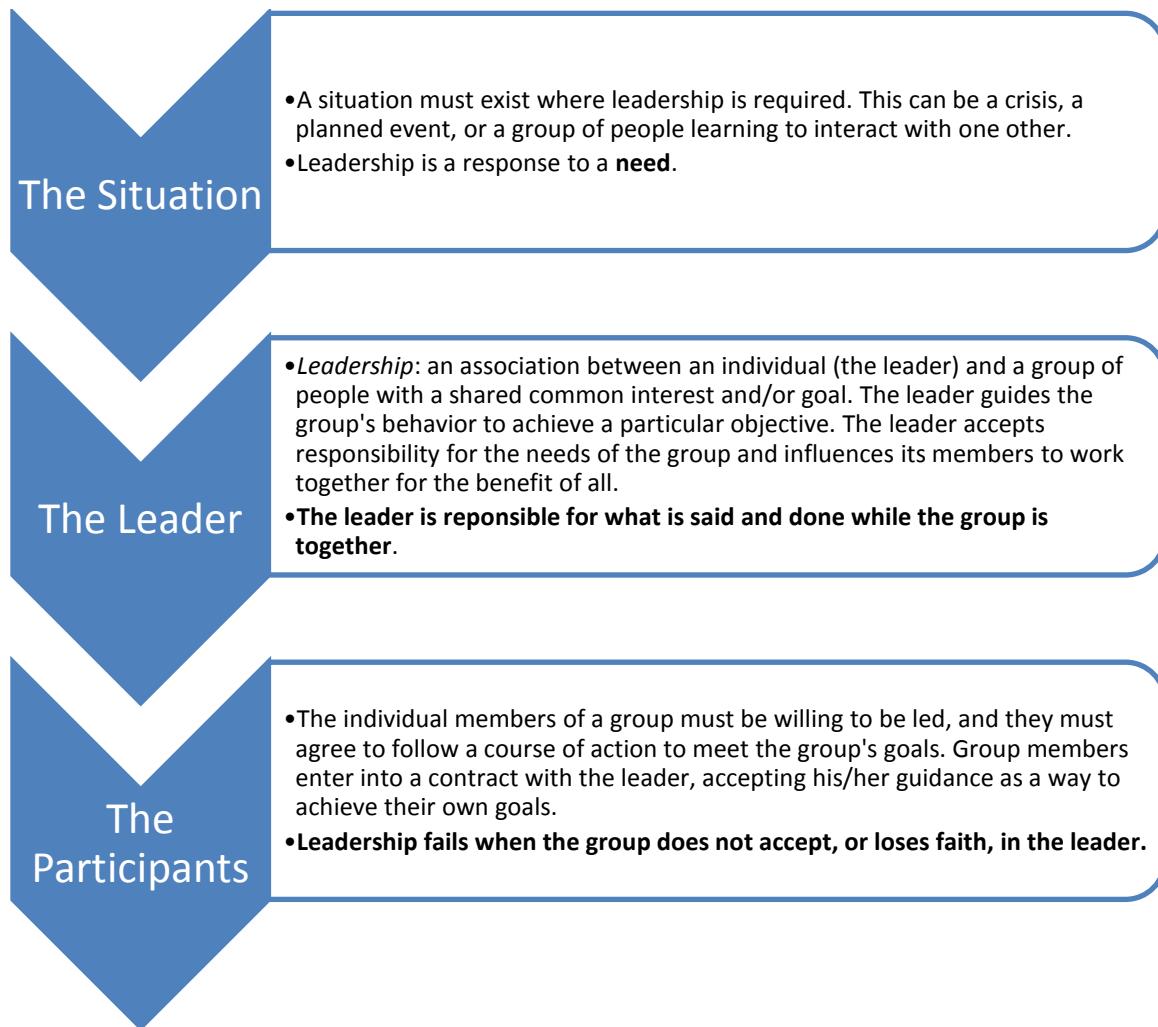
This AMC Outdoor Leader Handbook has the following goals:

- **To provide information for leaders to assist them in minimizing risk while leading enjoyable AMC trips;**
- **To raise each leader's level of outdoor leadership awareness;**
- **To help leaders become aware of the skills they need to develop;**
- **To build confidence and enthusiasm about leading AMC trips; and**
- **To teach leaders how to plan, organize, and lead AMC trips.**

Leaders and Groups

It's one thing to be proficient at an outdoor activity and quite another to lead a group of people proficiently on an outdoor activity.

Leadership is an elusive concept. What makes people follow a leader? Why do some people follow while others do not? Are people born with the ability to lead or can it be developed? Exactly what is leadership?



No single personality type is preferable for leadership. Some people seem to be "born" leaders. Shy, introverted people may not enjoy being in a leadership role, but they can be very effective leaders. Good leadership traits can be found in all personality types. Generally, a person who is comfortable with responsibility, decision-making, and being a resource for others, will find satisfaction in serving as a leader.

Leaders become **good** leaders through hard work and many years of experience. In the outdoors, a leader must be prepared to face physiological, psychological, and environmental challenges. Experience generally reduces a leader's anxiety about the situations s/he may confront, and thus makes him or her more confident and skillful than someone with less experience. An experienced leader may also have a better idea of how his/her personality will affect others and will have developed the ability to select an appropriate approach for relating to his or her participants, depending on the situation.

Leadership Styles

The way in which a leader approaches both a group and a situation is called *leadership style*. For example, a leader may decide to be low key instead of highly interactive. The leader's style reflects his or her personality, experience, and the situation at hand. A style type should be selected according to the situation and the participants. To address the needs of a group, or individuals within that group, a leader may need to employ several different leadership styles.

Choice of style greatly influences a leader's effectiveness. A decision to change styles can be very important either as a long-term adaptation or as a quick adjustment in response to a new situation. When faced with many options, a leader must adopt a style that will bring about unity when participants cannot agree.

It is possible to delineate several styles of leadership. No leader should rely on only one. Leadership styles are fluid and most people find themselves using several or all the styles at one time or another depending upon the situation. The four main styles are:

DIRECTING SELLING PARTICIPATING DELEGATING

- ◆ **Directing:** This leader is in command. S/he makes the decisions for the group and provides information as “orders.” This style is task-oriented and geared to deal with the problem at hand. For example, a thunderstorm is approaching. The leader assesses the situation and says, “Everyone turn around now! We're going down.” This style is particularly useful with children, or groups in crisis or close to panic. When done well, this style can be very attractive to many participants who do not want to be involved in any of the decision making.
- ◆ **Selling:** This leader also knows what he or she wants the group to do. There is little room for the participants not to “buy” the leader's point of view. The leader sells, persuades, and convinces participants to do what he or she has decided. Continuing with our bad-weather example (but without a thunderstorm), this leader would say, “Look guys, there are some clouds building up over there. I think it's a bit risky to continue. We're probably going to get caught in a storm. We definitely don't want to get wet, right? Let's go down.”
- ◆ **Participating:** This leader also makes the decision for a group. The difference is that participants' opinions are solicited and considered before he or she arrives at a decision. This leader questions, listens, reflects, and often paraphrases what has been said, and then he or she directs the group. The participants have a much greater sense of participation in the decision-making process. In this style, there is a focus on the process of decision making rather than just the outcome. Returning to the example we used above, this leader would start a conversation with the group by saying, “Look at those clouds over there. What do you think about continuing?” S/he would

then listen to everyone's concerns, think about what everyone said, and then *the leader* would make the final decision. "I've thought it over and I've decided we should go down. I know not everyone feels the same, but I agree with Bob and Sarah that it's too risky to continue."

- ♦ **Delegating:** This leader makes decisions only in emergencies, spending time facilitating a process by which participants make their own decisions. S/he will lead the group in questioning, listening, reflecting and informing to allow participants to arrive at a decision about what is to be done. This leader allows the group to have ownership and responsibility for its decisions.

Continuing with our weather example from above, this leader might be the first to notice and mention the clouds building up, but he or she might also wait until someone in the group mentioned it, and then say, "I noticed them, too. What do you think? Should we continue to the top?" He or she would continue to ask questions and encourage everyone in the group to voice an opinion, occasionally summarizing what he or she is hearing. "So far this is what I hear: John and Sue, you definitely want to go down. Sandy, you seem undecided. What concerns do you have?" The discussion would continue until a solution was found that everyone could accept. "I have a real sense now that we all want to go back down to camp." With this style the leader facilitates the decision, but the group makes the decision. Discussions take time, but the end result is greater support for each decision.

Leader and participant involvement in the decision-making process varies with each of these styles. The directing leaders have all of the decision-making responsibility, while the delegating type leaders give their participants all the responsibility.

Two other leadership styles worth mentioning, but not as easy to define as the others above are: **Laissez-faire** and **Charismatic**:

1. **Laissez-faire.** This leader is not concerned with moment-to-moment decision making. This style is suitable only with groups of competent, friendly, and well-motivated participants. For this style to work, each group member, and the group as a whole, must make good decisions. With this style it is often difficult to recognize the leader until a situation arises where he or she is needed. Most of the time this leader's role is not different from that of other participants.
2. **Charismatic.** This is the leader whom others wish to follow because of the attractiveness of his or her personality. This is the leader who inspires us and makes us want to accomplish more. Taken to extremes, this can be a very dangerous style if participants stop using their own judgment and follow blindly. This is often the style we think of when we think of "leadership," but it is not a style that we attempt to teach or develop. Its role is limited in the outdoor environment, but it does have a place. When participants are tired and hungry, it helps to have the lift that an inspirational leader can provide.

Participant Roles

Leadership is not isolated to a leader but is very strongly linked to participants. Just as there are models for leadership styles, there are also models for participant roles. Here we'll look at three major roles:

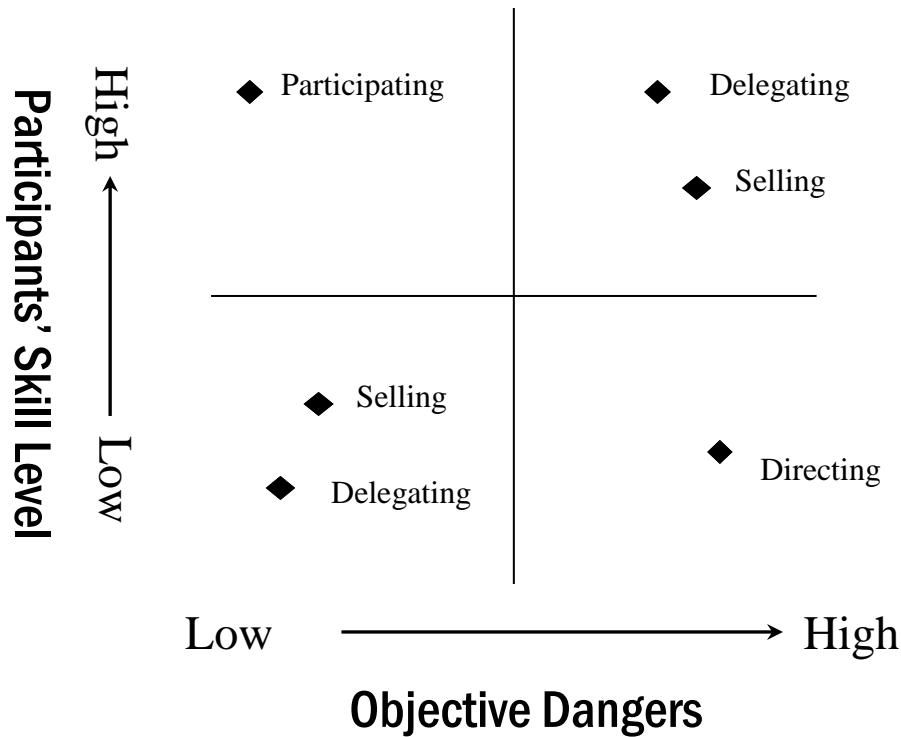
- **Opposer**
- **Follower**
- **Bystander**

1. **Opposer:** This person tends to criticize, challenge, and attempt to undermine the leader. The form of opposition may be very subtle (someone in the back of the line muttering and complaining under his or her breath) or very obvious (someone who is constantly questioning the leader's decisions in front of the whole group). A leader's reaction to this type of participant is usually anger, and some leaders may be intimidated.
2. **Follower:** This person respects authority and is usually very supportive of the leader. This participant may develop a real dependence on the leader or may just have a need to accept someone else's guidance. The leader's reaction to this person is usually appreciation. This type of participant confirms the leader's role.
3. **Bystander:** This person tends to be somewhat aloof, going along with the program, whatever forms it takes. If there is a conflict in the group, the bystander will not become involved or take sides. The leader's reaction to this person tends to be neutral (as contrasted with the negative reaction to the opposer and the positive reaction to the follower).

As with the different leadership styles, participant roles are flexible. A person, who is by nature a follower, may suddenly become an opposer if he or she is put into a position perceived as threatening or uncomfortable. Conversely, an opposer might become a follower if a leader's actions earn the respect of this individual.

Adapting Leadership Styles to Participant Roles

How does a leader's style mesh with participants' roles and abilities? When do you use what style? What situation calls for what style? These are difficult questions to answer but can be the key to excellent, flexible leadership. We can make a few suggestions based on examples of different situations and different types of groups. You will notice objective hazards and participant skill levels are critical – the greater the risk, the more forceful or decisive your leadership style will most likely need to be. However, because each group is different, any style may work in any situation.



There are no rules and regulations governing the choice of leadership style. A good leader approaches each situation and each participant as unique. Previous experience might inform a leader's decisions, but flexibility and adaptation are the keys to success. Leaders need the ability to switch from one style to another as the situation changes and as they get to know their participants.

Leadership style is also an important factor to consider when selecting or working with a co-leader. If there is a particular leadership style you find challenging, consider seeking out a co-leader who is innately comfortable with that style. When working with a co-leader, take time to discuss your strengths and weaknesses in terms of leadership style(s) so you can give each other support as well as opportunities to practice different roles.

Group Life Cycles

Simply defined, a **group** is a collection of people sharing some kind of interrelationship. We can identify many different types of groups, both large and small. Examples of large groups might include a society, a community, a major business enterprise (such as a “Fortune 500” company), an organization (such as the AMC), or a sub-organization (such as an AMC chapter). Small groups may be defined as those consisting of no more than twenty to thirty people. Examples of small groups might include a family, a project team in your workplace, a committee (such as an AMC chapter’s hiking or backpacking committee), a trail maintenance crew, or a gathering of friends.



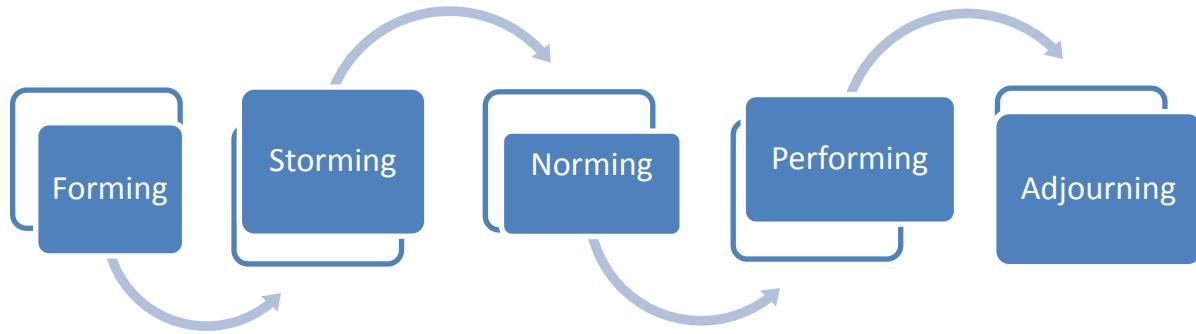
Groups engaging in the kinds of outdoor activities addressed by this manual are small groups, ideally consisting of around ten people. On any backpacking trip, or on hikes in environmentally sensitive areas, group size must be limited to ten or less. In many cases, the local land agency puts limits on the number of people (in a group) allowed in certain areas. Be sure to check with the managing agency for the area in which you intend to travel. In other instances, such as day hikes in a heavily used parks close to major metropolitan areas, the group size may be more than ten people—but leading a larger group offers different challenges, esp. for a new leader.

Certain characteristics are inherent to the successful formation of a small group. Its members must:

- Be able to communicate easily with one another;
- Be engaged in an activity in which they share a common goal/objective;
- Be aware of their interdependence and recognize it is in their best interest to cooperate with one another; and
- Work together for a sufficient period of time.

In many ways, a small group of individuals is its own complex living entity. If its members are together long enough, a group can progress through a series of **developmental stages or “life cycle,”** just like the individual human beings who comprise it.

The pioneering work in group development was done by Bruce W. Tuckman. Tuckman reviewed many studies to determine the five stages of group development, better known as the *group life cycle*. The five distinct stages are:



It should be noted groups with a short life span may not go through all these developmental stages and, in some instances, groups may not go through the stages in sequential order. Leaders and group members who understand this developmental life cycle are better equipped to survive the shaky and sometimes turbulent beginnings of a group and thereby reap the benefits as the group matures into a cohesive, functional unit in the final stages.

Stage One: Forming

The Group Dynamic: There are countless scenarios that can bring people together as a group. Although these scenarios are as diverse as the individuals who may constitute the group, there are some behavioral dynamics common to all newly formed groups. Dominant behavioral characteristics of individual members in a *forming* group are politeness and superficiality. Individuals experience a sense of approach/avoidance anxiety as they carefully position themselves in relation to one another. The main intra-group dynamic is inclusion/exclusion; each individual questions whether s/he wants to be a member of the group, and the group simultaneously questions whether it wants him or her as a member.

Leadership: Because of the confusion, ambiguity, and anxiety which pervade a newly formed group, it searches desperately for leadership. At this point, any reliable direction, guidance or information might quickly be embraced by its members. Leader-group behavioral dynamics in a *forming* group are characterized by the members' dependency on leadership.

The leader's focus during the *forming* of a group should be on the following:

- Allowing space for each individual;
- Working on involvement at a safe pace;
- Setting clear expectations;
- Providing information or rules for how a group works together;
- Gently inviting trust;
- Minimizing competitive interaction; and
- Fostering common goals/objectives.

Many groups meeting for a day trip remain at the *forming* stage. Groups involved in activities that can be accomplished by individual members with minimal interaction, such as hiking or biking, may never get past the polite niceties of this initial stage. If the completion of a group task is required, such as cooking a meal, then the group may progress beyond *forming*.

Stage Two: Storming

The Group Dynamic: This is a crucial stage in a group's life cycle because it deals both with power structure and with the decision-making processes that are necessary for the group to function later on. *Storming* is the most difficult stage for a group, its individual members, and a leader. The identities of individuals clash with the newly forming identity of the group. At this stage, the dominant behavior of individuals within the group reflects a conflict between autonomy and affiliation. A participant strives to retain his/her individuality and state his/her needs while still identifying and connecting with the larger group. A full range of emotions typically appears during this process.

Interpersonally, group members are concerned with control, i.e., needs such as influence and status. They question whether they are in control and whether there is a sense of direction. A group may voice frustration, anger or a desire for more direction from its leaders.

Leadership: The leader's focus during the *storming* stage of a group should be on the following:

- Allowing autonomy;
- Allow the group to express discomfort, anxiety, and frustration while maintaining a balanced approach to addressing behavior which challenges authority;
- Enforcing group rules and policies;
- Clarifying issues; and
- Maintaining sufficient authority and control.



A group typically exhibits the *storming* stage when it attempts to cook its first meal together. Expressions such as "too many cooks spoil the soup" and "if you can't stand the heat get out of the kitchen" are frequently heard and are expressions of the control issues that dominate this stage. Group members who attempt to lead (i.e., organize the cooking) are frequently greeted with criticism and their efforts undermined until the group reaches consensus on an order and process for making decisions.

A group is ready to progress to the next stage only when its members create and agree upon on an acceptable group decision-making process. A group trying to move beyond this stage without resolving its control issues will find itself returning to *storming*.

Stage Three: Norming

The Group Dynamic: In this stage, the group members begin *norming* their roles in relation to one another. Participants begin to accept and establish their roles within the group. Group members also begin to understand each other's strengths and weaknesses during this stage. Tasks are defined and decisions made according to the order and processes established in the *storming* stage. The group begins to move forward as one and often tasks are accomplished with minimal direction.

Leadership: When a group evolves to this stage, trust develops among its members. The group relies on/looks to the “leader” less as it assumes ownership over its experiences. Leadership behavior should involve clarification and facilitation. Good leadership styles to try at this stage are those involving consensus and shared leadership.

The leader’s focus in the *norming* stage of group development should be on the following:

- Listening to group members;
- Supporting the group as a whole;
- Encouraging participation for everyone; and
- Facilitating “constructive conflict.”

The sense of accomplishment derived from finishing a task, reaching consensus, or solving a problem is a powerful unifying force within a group. A unique, and unifying, identity emerges when a group becomes fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses and understands how to work through differences productively.

For example, there is an amazing transformation within a group that has successfully prepared its first meal together. Its members have established an identity and bond which permits them to tackle even bigger challenges at later points during the group’s existence.

Stage Four: Performing

The Group Dynamic: During this stage, a group has established itself as a unit and not merely as a collection of individuals. The behavior of each participant is governed by commitment to the group and involvement in achieving its goals. Intra-group behavior is directed toward *performing*. Group members work collaboratively and synergistically toward the group’s goal. Tasks are accomplished by a blend of leading, sanctioning, and following through.

Leadership: This period in group development is a leader's reward for all the hard work done earlier in helping the group *form*. During this stage, the leader steps out of the limelight, and focuses on providing input for clarification and/or managing risk. This includes:

- Maintaining sense of purpose/direction;
- Supporting the group; and
- Balancing being involved, but not too involved

The leader's job is to clarify tasks and questions, but only at crucial times. This can be hard if you start to see the group heading back towards the *storming* stage. As a leader, you can allow a group to fail and succeed. Those experiences help a group, and individuals, continue to grow.

Do keep in mind risk management: Do not let the group make a big mistake or a careless decision where someone can get hurt.

Stage Five: Adjourning

After a group successfully completes its full life cycle, there is a natural tendency for its members to attempt to remain together. Unfortunately, failing to disengage once the cycle concludes, typically leads to a hollow, unfinished feeling in the future. Thus, Tuckman, along with Mary Jenkins, years after his first group life cycle study, added the fifth and final stage to group development: *adjourning*.

The Group Dynamic: An individual's behavior at closure may reflect a sense of loss and even a denial of the significance of the group to him or her. Separation anxiety may be eased through a process known as "clustering," in which group members position themselves close to one another at the conclusion of an activity. Intra-group behavior might include evaluations of the group or a brief summary of the group's challenges and successes.

Leadership: The leader should facilitate an activity at the end of a trip. It is helpful to consider this *adjourning* stage during your pre-trip planning so you can let folks know of your plans before, or during, the trip. The length/extent of a closure activity depends upon the type of trip and how the group progressed in its development (i.e., what stage did the group reach in the group life cycle continuum?). **Facilitate this process, in whatever form it takes, so no one feels left out or is forgotten.**

Some ideas for closure:

- Thank participants, shake hands, and invite them to other AMC activities.
- A group photo
- A "tailgate" party—can be as simple as a bag of M&Ms or could be as complex as a grilling event.
- Suggest the group visits a nearby restaurant or dairy bar.

Often successful groups plan reunions. If these reunions occur, they rarely meet expectations because the context for the group's existence, and the relationships between its members, change. **It is far better to savor the joy of an experience at its conclusion than to try to recreate that experience in the future.** Complete the cycle and share good-byes without sorrow. Learn from your experience and look forward to your next group activity.



Decision Making

As an outdoor leader, you are constantly responsible for making decisions for the group. When we make our decisions, we often do not pay too much attention to the information or thought processes we utilize. Most of us like to view ourselves as informed, responsible, rational human beings who exercise good judgment. But in reality, when we make decisions we sometimes rely on information that is faulty, irrelevant, and incomplete. In addition, we allow our decision-making processes to be influenced both by peer pressure and by our own personal desires, prejudices, and deeply engrained behavior patterns.

Some decisions can be made slowly over a long period of time, others must be made in an instant. In some situations there is a vast amount of reliable information, in others there is very little. Sometimes we can make our decisions when we are calm and relaxed, other times we must make them when we are under severe stress. In some situations, there may be an optimal solution—which we can identify if we work at it. But many times there is none—we must make a choice and hope for the best. If we are lucky, when we make a poor choice, we can begin the process again and hope for a better outcome.

Outdoor leaders typically rely on one of three models to make decisions: an analytical model, a risk/benefit model, or a heuristic model. Differences between the models include the amount of information known about the situation and the amount of time a leader has to make a decision.

Analytical	Risk/Benefit	Heuristic
➔		
➔ Very thorough	➔ Modest amount of time	➔ Minimal amount of time
➔ Good outcome likely	➔ Modest amt. of information	➔ Ideal for low-risk decisions
➔ Very time-intensive	➔ Outliers won't be considered	➔ Relies on assumptions
➔ Requires lots of information		➔ Ignores red flags
➔		

What does an analytical approach to decision-making look like?

An analytical approach to making a decision generally involves following the following steps in order:

- Identify and define the problem
- Generate solutions
- Evaluate solutions
- Select a solution
- Implement the solution
- Evaluate the outcome
- Repeat as necessary

This approach is most helpful when a decision has the potential to cause significant harm, and therefore arriving at a decision that minimizes the risk of significant harm is of utmost importance. The analytical approach requires the decision-maker(s) to have plenty of time and information.

What does a risk/benefit approach to decision-making look like?

A risk/benefit approach to decision-making generally involves the following steps in order:

- Identify the issue or question (often, this is a “should I do X or not?” situation)
- Identify 2-3 possible actions to take
- Identify the risks and benefits of each possible action
- Make a decision and implement the solution

This approach is a good choice for situations that do not pose a significant risk OR for situations that require a decision to be made more quickly than is possible with an analytic approach. It requires less information-gathering than the analytical approach, but significantly more than the heuristic approach.

What does a heuristic approach to decision-making look like?

A heuristic approach to decision-making is generally a subconscious manner of deciding what to do. Heuristics are mental shortcuts that allow our brains to make decisions based on a familiar pattern of information. When we step on the brakes in response to brake lights on the car ahead of us, or when we pour just the right amount of milk in our coffee, or when we turn the gas down on a stove as the pasta water begins to bubble over the pan, we are using mental shortcuts – heuristics – to take action with minimal or no conscious thought. Heuristics free our brains to deal with unfamiliar situations or the most pressing matters, but heuristics can also be the source of poor decision-making in situations of higher risk or situations where a variation from the typical pattern is not detected. This approach is a good choice for situations that pose very little threat or require immediate action.

In the context of outdoor leadership, it is important to note that there is a physical side of decision making. Our brain's ability to function can be affected by conditions such as dehydration, body temperature, fatigue, and our emotional state. Perhaps the most striking illustration of the brain's impaired ability can be seen in hypothermic individuals. The behavior of an individual suffering from hypothermia becomes confused, erratic, and apathetic. Judgment is impaired such that the victim may fail to put on warm clothing, cast aside essential equipment, disregard his or her direction of travel, and ultimately make poor decisions.

In conclusion, as outdoor leaders, our ultimate goal is to provide a group of individuals with a safe and enjoyable outing. A good leader can read the situation at hand, take sufficient time to gather and evaluate information, consider the needs and desires of those in our group and ultimately make the best decision for the group.

Trip Planning & Management

Because AMC members enjoy such a broad range of recreational activities, trip planning and management varies greatly throughout the club—everything from urban walks, or exploring local parks, to technical whitewater kayaking. Not all of the information in the following section will apply to all activity leaders – leaders must tailor the elements of trip planning to fit their activities. If in doubt, err on the side of safety and more detailed planning.

At first, the process of trip planning and management may seem daunting. To ease those concerns, here are a few tips:

- Even if you are inexperienced in planning group activities, you most likely have experience planning a family vacation, personal trip, etc. that will help you along the way.
- Checklists are good aids for successful trip planning. This section will provide you with several checklists to help you get started.
- A good trip plan is detailed. While the amount of detail should be dictated by the complexity and risk involved with the trip, in general, the more, the better.
- To provide a substantial margin of safety, be prepared to be flexible – build alternatives into your trip so you can more easily deal with complications that may arise.



Routes and Trip Plans

Once you have defined *what* type of trip you are going to lead and *where*, you need to develop a trip plan or itinerary (the *how*). A key component of a trip plan is route selection. **In developing your route, some factors to consider are:**

- **Distance** – How far do you plan to travel? Distance will have a significant impact on the level of difficulty for your trip. Keep in mind factors like: available hours of daylight, start and end times, and how weather may impact the route.
- **Water** – Is water available? You may be able to bring all the water you need, but it is still a good idea to bring a treatment system (like iodine or a water filter) and know where you might find water on the route. On a longer trip, this is an extremely important factor. If hiking, be especially wary of long stretches above tree line.
- **Terrain** – What are the conditions? There are many things to consider, including: Will the route be relatively flat, steep, rough, exposed, or slippery? Keep in mind the season and recent weather. Check with a local rangers' office or other local services to receive the latest information on route conditions or possible closures.
- **Potential Hazards** – What points along the route have an associated increased risk? If you will be spending time above treeline or on open water, consider danger from lightning storms. Stream or river crossings and road crossings are also potential hazard points. The prevalence of busy urban intersections should be considered when planning road bike routes.

Alternate or “Bail Out” Routes – What are the potential ways you can alter your route if you run into problems? As mentioned earlier, having a substantial margin of safety and an ability to be flexible are critical in route planning. How would you change your route if there was an injury, a lightning storm or your group pace was slower than anticipated?

- **“Surprises”** – Pleasant surprises for your participants can also be a great idea – a spectacular lunch spot with a view or an area with interpretive signs describing the areas' history could add to the day's itinerary.

You do not necessarily need to approach the above factors in a specific order – based on your interests and your trip, certain elements of the route planning process may be more important than others.

Once you've decided upon your route, additional factors to consider for your overall trip plan include:

- **Time Management** – This includes all the time related factors on your trip. What time will you tell your group to meet? When do you plan to depart the starting location? What is your turnaround time? How many hours a day will you hike (or bike, paddle, ski, etc.)?

- If hiking, here is a basic formula you can use to determine the amount of time to allocate for a trip: Start with a standard pace of 2 miles/hour and add 1 hour for every 1000 feet of elevation gained and $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for every 1000 feet of elevation you lose. While you should have some idea of when you plan to finish your trip, make sure participants realize the finish time is an estimate, not a guarantee.
- **Emergency Action Plan (EAP)** – These are all the things you need to consider in case an emergency should occur on your activity. If you are roadside and need help, you will most likely call 911. However, you should also know where the nearest hospitals are in case of a minor injury. If traveling in the backcountry, you should be aware of whatever search and rescue resources are available and how to contact them. Make sure the emergency contact information on a participant's liability waiver is legible and complete.
- **Regulations, Permits and Reservations** – You must always be aware of the regulations for your activity area. If you are camping, you may need a permit – be sure to research this as early as possible so you can reserve space if needed. If you are running a trip in the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF), you'll need an Outfitter Guide Card, which you can acquire through your Chapter.
- **Food and Equipment** – Needs will vary greatly depending on the trip. Make sure you plan well and provide for a “margin of safety” – emergency food that is easy to prepare, repair kits for critical equipment, duct tape, extra fuel if you are using stoves, etc. In addition, make sure you plan for group needs as well as individual needs and are clear in communicating to participants what they are expected to bring (and NOT to bring).
- **Cancellation** – If there is a possibility your trip may cancel, make sure you plan for this eventuality. Have a contact list so you can get in touch with everyone. If there is any money involved, decide how and when you will refund it.



Screening Participants

An essential part of trip planning as well as risk management is determining who is qualified to participate in your trip. As mentioned before, the broad range of trips one might consider has a direct effect on the level and depth of screening – from no screening (“show and go” trips) to extensive questioning of participants and possible reference checks. The goals of the trip, its location, and the time of year (winter vs. summer) also affect trip requirements and consequently the screening involved. The trip’s intended audience (families, adults,) also impacts the level of screening.

Although good screening will not eliminate all problems that might occur during a trip, it can go a long way to limiting risk proactively before a trip. The main goal of screening is to match a participant with the physical and equipment requirements of a trip. During your initial contact with a prospective participant, you have the opportunity to explain trip requirements (equipment, clothing, and cost) as well as establish clear expectations for the group. Sometimes people will screen themselves from a trip after they receive this information. Having a participant opt out of a trip voluntarily is preferable to a leader having to tell an individual a trip is beyond his or her current abilities. However if that situation arises, and the trip is an AMC sponsored event, we strongly encourage leaders to suggest a specific, more suitable trip for the individual. This is especially important for new AMC members or the inexperienced person who might otherwise feel s/he is being “blown off.” Alternatively, you can simply provide a person with a list of more appropriate trips.

Note: If you, or your co-leader, are leading a trip to an area you haven’t hiked, biked, skied, etc., then it will be more difficult to screen as the physical requirements of the trip will be less clear. In this case, consider setting a higher experience level and more stringent physical requirements.

Another purpose in screening is to limit group size. Certain locations have regulations on the maximum number of people traveling and/or camping together.

If your trip is advertised in publications or a newsletter, then:

- Be prepared for a phone call anytime (did you state when to call)? Avoid screening via email unless you know the person and their abilities. A direct conversation is preferred since it is more interactive and allows you to get a better sense of a person’s true abilities and experience.
- Have a list handy of questions to ask (see below). You may need to explain why you are asking these questions (as the leader you are responsible for the group and want everyone to have a good time). Develop your own style. A relaxed conversation that encourages a potential participant to volunteer information is better than just bombarding them with a battery of questions.
- If they qualify for the trip, provide initial information (follow-up later with email or printed information sheet).
- Remember screening does not end until the trip actually begins – be sure to check equipment/clothing at the starting location.

The following questions can be used to screen participants for outdoor trips. The difficulty level of the trip will determine which questions to ask.

1. What is your name/ address/telephone number? (Ask for the correct spelling, if necessary)
2. Are you a member of the AMC? If so, what is your home Chapter? How long have you been a member?
3. Is anyone coming with you on the trip? (If so, you, as a leader, need to have a conversation with that person too). Do not allow the caller to “register” another person unless you already know that person and his/her experience level.
4. What is your experience level? (Explain the trip rating system if applicable.)
5. What is the longest trip you have been on?
6. Have you gone with a group before?
7. What other trips have you been on and who led them? What trips have you done in the past 6 months?
8. What kind of exercise do you do regularly? How often?
9. Do you have the necessary equipment for this trip?
10. What is the worst problem you have ever had on a trip?
11. Do you have any medical problems or are you taking any medications that could be pertinent to the trip? Allergies? Asthma?
12. Do you have any medical training you wish to share with me or the group?
13. Do you have any questions?

After obtaining these answers, you may decide whether a trip is beyond a person's skill level, within it, or too elementary. If a person wishes to participate in trip that is too easy for him or her, that decision is the participant's. It can be helpful to emphasize, in that situation, the trip is geared toward a different audience with less experience. Restating this information helps you, as a leader, to proactively manage expectations.

However, if a person wants to go on a trip that is beyond his/her ability, that is your decision. For an advanced trip, it is best not to accept someone you do not know until you have a chance to check the individual's references – you'll touch base with participants from past trips as well other leaders. As a leader, it is your responsibility to recommend a person does not participate. If a person insists on participating, you may have to refuse to take him/her. Explain the trip includes certain risks (provide specifics) and how an inexperienced participant could create a possible burden on the leader and other participants. Encourage the individual to try a less advanced trip to increase his/her skill level. If a person's equipment is incomplete or inadequate, you may require him/her to borrow or purchase the proper gear, for his/her personal comfort and safety and that of the group.

If a person qualifies for a trip, mention the requirements, such as deadline for deposit, cancellation policy, length of trip, where and when to meet and what type of snack or food to bring. State you will begin the trip promptly. Indicate how long you, and the group, will wait, after the start time, at the meeting location for any remaining participants to arrive.

Note: A goal of AMC trips is to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for people of any age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. Some AMC programs are designed for a specific population, or topic. However, **any** person who meets the minimum qualifications (skills, experience, and fitness level) established by a trip leader(s) for an activity is eligible to attend, if space is available. **Remember: A well-planned trip and well-prepared participants make for an enjoyable and safer experience for all. Good screening can do much to ensure this happens.**

Trip Planning and Management Flowchart

Consider

Location

- ...> Travel time
- ...> Available Parking
- ...> Date/Start Time
- ...> Hour of available daylight
- ...> Date/End Time
- ...> Emergency Plan
- ...> Fees/Permits/Regulations
- ...> Ride share Location/Tolls
- ...> Food/Equipment
- ...> Cancellation Policy
- ...> Emergency Services

Physical Trail

- ...> Distance
- ...> Terrain
- ...> Difficulty
- ...> Access to Water
- ...> Stream/River Crossings
 - ...> Ice/Snow/Rocks
 - ...> Turnaround Time
- ...> Seasonal Conditions
 - ...> Bail-out Route(s)
 - ...> Alternate Route(s)
- ...> Leave No Trace (LNT)

Yourself & Others

- ...> Fitness Level (Plan trips that use 70% or less of your energy resources)
- ...> Required Individual Gear
- ...> Group Gear (first aid kit, extra food, water, etc...)
- ...> Food Requirements
- ...> Select a Co-Leader
- ...> Physical Requirements
- ...> Group Size (Min./Max)
- ...> Show N' Go or Pre-Screen

Plan, document and market

Plan the Trip (Define Expectations)

Pick a co-leader. Write a short description for marketing your trip (Activity Database (ActDB), Facebook, Meetup, etc..). Develop personal and group gear lists. Write a long description with lots of details for participants to use during screening and subsequent communications. This is your first opportunity to address Risk Management and group dynamics. If it's a trip you have not run before, have committee chair review before you submit to ActDB.

Post the Trip (Set Expectations/Initial Screen)

Use ActDB Style Guide to help you post your trip on the AMC's website. Remember, this is your first opportunity to set expectations for the trip. Once your trip has been approved and is visible on the AMC's site, post in other locations to help get the word out (Facebook, Meetup, etc..).

Screen Participants (Personalize as needed/continue setting expectations)

Make a list of things to tell each participant (what to bring, meeting info, trip details, etc...)

AND

List of what you need to know about each participant (contact info, relevant experience, medical issues, physical conditioning, equipment, etc...)

Execute the plan!

Day(s) before event

- ...> Check trail and weather conditions
- ...> Finalize ride share
- ...> Leave copy of itinerary with someone at home
- ...> Confirm participation
 - ...> Go, cancel or alternate routes
- ...> Restock your first aid kit!
- ...> Check you pack/gear
- ...> Take care of yourself (Eat balanced meals, drink plenty of liquids and get a good night's sleep!)

Day of

- ...> Meet and Greet
- ...> Gear Check
- ...> Health Issues
- ...> Trip Talk
- ...> Establish Rules
- ...> Signed Releases (goes with you)

Take the trip!

- ...> Monitor the group
- ...> Work the crowd
- ...> Stop at all junctions
- ...> Watch the weather & Time
- ...> Know where you are
- ...> Leave No Trace (LNT)
- ...> Have Fun! Minimize Risk!

After the outing

- ...> Start YOUR car first, Collect group gear, Thank participants
- ...> Post trip activity (lunch, dinner) Talk, Debrief with Co-leader(s)
- ...> Send in paperwork (waiver form, incident report (if needed))

Trip Planning Form

Use this form to guide your planning for your next trip. Some sections may not be relevant to your trip and there may be aspects of the trip you need to plan that are not included here.

Detailed Route Description: (list hand-rails you'll use during the trip, risks to avoid, junctions or other major features, direction of travel, etc.)

Risk Management	To Do
Group Safety Gear: (communication device, maps and navigation aids, first aid kit, water treatment, light, extra gear, etc.) _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Post trip and advertise it <input type="checkbox"/> Register participants, collect payments, screen? <input type="checkbox"/> Logistics and information to participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Meet-up time and place- Leader contact info (beforehand and day-of)- What would cancel the trip- Packing list- Basic trip description- Refund policy
Bail Out Points: _____ _____ _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Scout route <input type="checkbox"/> Check conditions and weather <input type="checkbox"/> Pack group gear, safety gear, personal gear <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
Anticipated Risks: (weather, conditions, difficulty, route-finding, gear, etc.) _____ _____ _____	

Trip Management

The day the trip begins:

1. Review the weather early enough to cancel, if necessary;
2. Have list of participants meeting at designated meeting spot; and
3. Arrive on time or EARLY at the meeting place to inspire some confidence in your participants.

At the meeting spot:

1. Check in participants as they arrive. Have them sign the AMC Volunteer Release Agreement (discussed in *AMC Policy and Forms* section). Know who has a vehicle, the location of vehicle keys, if there is gas in the vehicle(s), etc.
2. Review equipment, especially critical items, including food and water. If you are leading an extended trip, this process is especially important. For example, for a backpacking trip, make sure stoves work, all tents have poles and rainfly covers, etc. If someone is unprepared and/or has inadequate equipment, you will need to either provide that individual with adequate gear, or ask him or her not to participate.
3. Set a positive tone for the group. Facilitate introductions between participants. Remind everyone they need to watch out for each other. One's individual welfare is inseparable from that of the group.
4. Outline the trip plan. Make sure everyone is familiar with the pace, destination, timetable, etc. Tell people what's going on!
5. Review the goals and expectations of your activity, making sure everyone understands AMC's priorities: (1) to maintain the safety of the group, (2) have a good time, and *then* (3) achieve the trip's highlighted objective (i.e., reach a specific summit)
6. Review any rules applicable to your activity. On a hiking trip, this may mean staying together and stopping at trail junctions or other potentially confusing points; on a biking trip, this may mean wearing helmets and obeying traffic laws, etc.
7. Assign lead and sweep responsibilities. When assigning roles, consider what role may fit your participants best. For example, the slowest participant may volunteer to sweep so s/he isn't holding the group back. This can cause problems if the sweep falls far behind the group. It is recommended designated sweeps are experienced hikers, have knowledge of the route, carry a first-aid kit, and know how to use it! Don't be afraid to make adjustments to these roles as the trip progresses and you see how the group dynamic unfolds.

On the Trip

1. Set a reasonable pace. A group moves efficiently at a pace that allows everyone to keep up and minimizes long stops and fast starts. Allow terrain and conditions to

dictate the pace and establish a speed the group can sustain over time. (i.e., think tortoise, not hare!)

2. Avoid the “Slinky effect”—i.e., the fastest member of the group moves quickly to the next stopping point, waits for the slowest member, and then takes off as soon as that person arrives. In that situation, the fastest member gets many breaks while the slowest gets none. Try to keep members of the group engaged with one another and hiking together.
3. Stay together. Resources and knowledge are maximized when a group is together:
 - Maintain visual contact with the person in front of and behind you;
 - Assemble at junctions or other potentially confusing points; and
 - Assign the slowest member to the lead position, if pace is a problem.
4. Watch the weather.
5. Be mindful of what is going on within the group. If someone is having a problem, address the issue early and encourage everyone else in the group to do the same. If someone is getting “hot spots,” stop immediately for blister prevention; if someone cannot keep up, try lightening their load or asking them to hike near the front of the group, etc.
6. Keep the lines of communication open. Discuss changes to the day’s plan, share revisions with the group, and keep everyone on the same page.
7. Be willing to turn around. Start by having a turnaround time based on the amount of daylight, weather conditions, the group’s abilities and anything else you know about the chosen route. When these factors change, you must also change. The desire of a group to reach an objective often does not accurately reflect the situation. Pay attention to facts rather than emotions and always have a plan B in mind.
8. Be aware of your surroundings, bail-out routes and alternatives.
9. Take decisive action in an emergency.
10. Have a group first aid kit and make sure everyone knows where it is located.
11. Talk about environmental sensitivity

Concluding the trip:

1. Account for all members of the group.
2. Make sure everyone has transportation.
3. Sign out at point of registration (if possible).
4. Return, sort or collect equipment.
5. Provide trip closure, a brief good-bye, and congratulations to everyone.
6. Determine if group is meeting down the road for a post trip gathering.



7. Review trip with the co-leader and trip members (if you choose).
8. Complete a trip report (if required).

Leave No Trace & Backcountry Ethics

Wildlands attract us for many meaningful reasons. For some, they possess the beauty, mystery, serenity, and tranquility we often lack in our day-to-day lives and landscapes. For others, they represent the true meaning of “wild”—untamed, untouched, and untraveled. For most of us, however, the wildlands we travel to are not areas where none have traveled before us—they are instead filled with well-traveled trails, rivers, and campsites many have used before us, and may even be within the boundaries of a state or national park or forest.

While the wilderness may seem rugged and permanent, it is actually an inherently fragile environment that has evolved over thousands of years. Ecosystems can be drastically altered in just minutes. And while the impact of one or two visitors may be minimal, the impact of several thousand visitors a year can be devastating for these fragile environments. Some would say we are “loving our wilderness to death” and if our practices don’t change, we will destroy much of the natural wilderness we love to experience. Specialized ecological processes can take many years to complete, especially in fragile environments, like those found above treeline, but can be undone in moments by the careless actions of outdoor enthusiasts.

Our outdoor recreation can be the cause of many detrimental environmental impacts that we unknowingly contribute to while we “experience” the wilderness. Because humans have already drastically altered so much of the world’s wildlands, it is increasingly important we learn about backcountry ethics and specific minimal-impact travel skills. The knowledge and deep understanding of the importance of backcountry ethics and minimal impact skills the AMC promotes is essential for all our outdoor leaders. As a leader, it is also your responsibility to share this knowledge with group members so they too recognize the potential impact of their actions.

When you prepare to take a group into the wilderness, you must take into consideration *Leave No Trace* (LNT) practices and techniques that have become the national standard for outdoor and wilderness travel. Further information about LNT, and LNT teaching materials can be found on the non-profit organization’s website, www.lnt.org. For further discussion of LNT techniques, and for information regarding climates not found in the Northeast, Soft Paths, by Bruce Hampton and David Cole (published by NOLS), is a great resource. The AMC has a partnership with the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics and is one of the organizations which teaches LNT Trainer and Master courses. For further training in LNT, more information about these courses can be found on the AMC’s website, www.outdoors.org. For now, familiarize yourself with the *Leave No Trace* program by reading more about it in the following section of this manual.

The 7 Principles of Leave No Trace

The *Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics* is a national non-profit organization that aims to promote awareness about the importance of the minimal impact skills mentioned above. The program is based upon seven main principles that every AMC outdoor leader should know, understand, and use. These seven principles are based upon basic common sense—you will probably find you already practice many of them.

The following is from the *Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics* website:
www.lnt.org:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare

- Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
- Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
- Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
- Visit in small groups. Split larger parties into groups of 4-6.
- Repackage food to minimize waste.
- Use a map and compass to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.

In popular areas:

- Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
- Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.

In pristine areas:

- Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
- Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

3. Dispose of Waste Properly

- Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter.
- Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
- Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
- To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

4. Leave What You Find

- Preserve the past: examine, but do not touch, cultural historic structures and artifacts.
- Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
- Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.

- Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

5. Minimize Campfire Impacts

- Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the backcountry. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
- Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
- Keep fires small. Only use sticks from the ground that can be broken by hand.
- Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

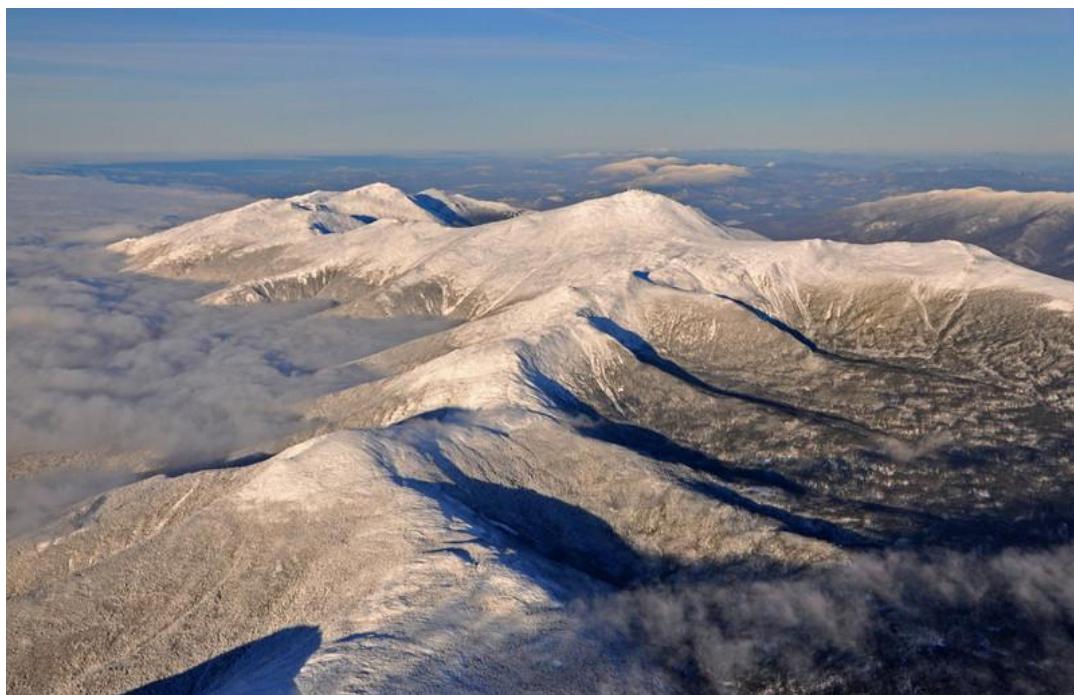
6. Respect Wildlife

- Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
- Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
- Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
- Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
- Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

- Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
- Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
- Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
- Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

© Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics: www.LNT.org



Applying the Principles of Leave No Trace

Aside from being aware of the seven Leave No Trace (LNT) principles, a general knowledge of why we practice low-impact backcountry travel is essential. Below you will find general explanations of why specific LNT principles are important for humans and the environment, and some useful guidelines with which all AMC leaders should be familiar.

Principle 1: Plan Ahead and Prepare

Why? Extensive planning and preparing before a trip is a crucial element of your leadership. This step is not just about safety—i.e., planning alternative routes that could be used in the case of an emergency. In terms of LNT, good planning and preparation for your trip will often reduce the chance your group may be tempted to make an environmentally unsound or unethical decision in a desperate moment. Leaders who have taken the time to prepare well for their trip and have taken all LNT principles into account *before* the trip will have a much better sense of how to most appropriately lead their group while following a good environmental ethic.

AMC Guidelines:

- Educate yourself about the area you will be traveling in—are there any endangered species? Are there any rules about group size or fires, or any fees at shelters?
- Repackage all food to eliminate excessive garbage in the backcountry and bring the correct amount of food so burying surplus food is not a temptation.
- Avoid congested areas whenever possible, especially at peak times, such as Memorial Day weekend, to avoid crowds and to respect wildlife in the area.
- Use proper equipment, and understand the potential detrimental effect your equipment may have on the environment if used improperly. For example, carry stoves to avoid making fires, and carry trekking poles on your pack instead of using them while hiking through areas in which they are not needed to reduce rock scarring and contributions to muddiness and/or erosion.
- Make sure you read the weather report before your trip, so you are aware if hypothermia or heat exhaustion will be a threat—these are debilitating conditions that will impair good judgment.

Principle 2: Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

Why? Traveling and camping on durable surfaces is very important so we minimize long-lasting impact on the environment. Leaders should recognize which land surfaces are durable and are therefore resistant to impact (such as grasses, leaf litter, rocks, sand, and snow). Leaders should also recognize which surfaces are less resistant to the impact of trampling—marshy and boggy areas, mosses, low growing shrubs, and small seedling plants. Trampling will cause vegetation damage and soil erosion in every environment—it creates and enlarges trails and campsites, removes vegetation and leaf litter needed to hold soils in place against loss to wind and rain, hardens the ground and destroys habitat for decomposers, and eventually takes the “wild” out of the wilderness.

AMC Guidelines:

- Remember good campsites are found, not made. Plan to spend some time looking for a good site (relatively flat and clear) instead of altering an area to make it a good campsite for your group (pulling up small shrubs and plants, etc.).
- Keep group size small—The *Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics* advises groups should not exceed ten people for overnight trips, and designated wilderness areas often have similar regulations. Remember to concentrate impact in popular areas (i.e., use trails, campsites, designated cooking areas) and disperse impact in pristine areas (i.e., spread out and try to minimize signs of use).
- Stay on already heavily impacted trails, and spread the group out when bushwhacking. When your group moves to the side of the trail to let others pass, try to find durable surfaces to stand on if possible.
- There is a natural tendency to try to walk around muddy sections of a trail and not directly through, even when wearing hiking boots. As a leader, it is especially important for you walk in the center of a trail to provide an example for your group (i.e., your actions speak louder than your words). Keep an eye out for this problem, and don't hesitate to speak up if you see group members avoiding the mud. If you know beforehand you will be traveling through mud, suggest group members bring gaiters.
- If a tree has fallen across the trail, go under it or over it if possible, instead of bushwhacking around it.
- In alpine zones (above treeline), pay particular attention to where you step in the fragile environment that surrounds you. Stay on trails, and be careful not to step on any plants as one small plant may have taken many years to develop in such a harsh environment.
- When you break camp, re-cover scuffed up areas with leaf litter or pine needles, and replace any rocks or branches you moved. When you leave the area, no one should be able to tell you, and your group, were ever there.

Principle 3: Dispose of Waste Properly

Why? In the backcountry, waste—namely food and human waste—cannot be picked up by the garbage truck or flushed down a toilet, never to be seen again. Most food and human waste will biodegrade eventually, but natural biodegrading processes cannot keep up with the growing environmental impact caused by humans. Waste left in the backcountry is unsightly, and the scent attracts animals. Our poor behavior habituates animals to associate food with human activity and, over time, this leads to negative, sometimes fatal, human/animal interactions. In order to be good stewards of the wildlands, we must pack out everything we have packed in, and dispose of all human waste properly.

AMC Guidelines:

- As a general rule, carry out everything you carry in, and pick up all litter you see left behind by others. Even trash that seems to be biodegradable (like orange peels or

apple cores) must be carried out. (Fun fact: According to the *Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics*, an orange peel can take up to 2 years to decompose!)

- Use a bit of cheesecloth or a screen to filter out bits of food before you scatter your dishwater. Throw these bits into your trash bag.
- Be especially careful to carry out all toilet paper and hygiene products—how many of us have had the unpleasant experience of coming across soiled toilet paper on the trail, especially in popular areas like the White Mountains?
- Plan meals that involve minimal garbage, especially messy and smelly garbage.
- Fires should not be used to dispose of food waste, as scraps and smells will still attract animals. Buried food scraps are quickly dug up by animals and they will come to associate that area (and any humans present) with food – a bad combination.
- Read and follow any instructions regarding the use of an outhouse. Never dispose of any type of trash in outhouses. These facilities are costly and time-consuming to maintain. Outhouses are intended for human waste only, and putting trash inside them decreases their effectiveness.
- Avoid polluting water sources by urinating and using cat holes at least 200 feet away from any water. Remember—water sources must be kept clean for future users.

(See the *Human Waste and Hygiene* section for a more extensive discussion of proper human waste disposal.)

Principle 4: Leave What You Find

Why? Many of us visit the wildlands because we enjoy getting to know the land—understanding its natural and human history, and discovering rare treasures that cannot be found in more populated areas. Because so many of us enjoy this aspect of the wilderness, it is important we do not take rocks, feathers, antlers, plants, or human historical artifacts we find. By leaving these items behind, we preserve the experience for the next visitors to that area. Photos, drawings, prose, and memories should be your only souvenirs.

AMC Guidelines:

- When traveling in an area rich with human history, “take only photos, leave only footprints.” It is important for leaders to make sure their groups do not alter areas of historical or cultural value.
- Remember the Archeological Resources Protection Act and the National Historic Preservation Act protect all artifacts of historical value, and excavating, disturbing, or removing these things from public lands is illegal.
- While picking vegetation might be a simple pleasure, remember wildlands are for everyone (and everything) to share—that branch or flower could be another creature’s home or food source.
- Do not build cairns or mark trees with blazes unless authorized to do so.
- When blueberries or other edible fruits are found and properly identified, feel free to taste a few, but remember over-harvesting could negatively impact the growth of new plants and animals depend on them for food.

- Never bring new plants or animals into the wildlands—invader species can cause large-scale, irreversible changes to ecosystems by out-competing and eliminating native species.

Principle 5: Minimize Campfire Impacts

Why? Campfires have long been the cause of too much impact on the environment in one small location. They cannot be justified for the sake of tradition or their beauty. In most cases, campfires are unnecessary, time-consuming, and should not be used—food should be cooked with a camp stove (even s'mores can be made with a camp stove's flame!) Firewood collection leaves the ground barren and trees scarred. Large fire rings with partly burned trash, food, and logs are unsightly. Most importantly, campfires are often the cause of wildfires. If you must make a fire, remember use of LNT techniques minimizes the lasting impacts of a campfire.

AMC Guidelines:

- Always carry appropriate clothing and equipment (a stove and sufficient fuel) so building a fire does not become necessary.
- Never make a fire where fires are not permitted, and make sure to use an established fire ring or a LNT technique (such as a fire blanket, pan, or a mound fire) where fires are permitted.
- Use your creativity to come up with alternatives to having a fire even where they are permitted—perhaps the group would enjoy sitting around a candle lantern while telling stories or sharing their thoughts about the trip.
- Make sure you only use small sticks on the ground for your fire—never break branches from trees or shrubs for firewood.
- Never leave a fire unattended, even for a minute. Keep water close by in case it gets out of hand.
- Before you go to bed, put the campfire out completely (make sure it is cool to the touch) and make sure only ashes remain. Scatter ashes away from the campsite.

Principle 6: Respect Wildlife:

Why? For many of us, observing wildlife is one of the greatest pleasures we hope to enjoy when we spend time in the wildlands. Unfortunately, much of the world's wildlife faces threats from habitat loss and fragmentation, invader species, pollution, over-exploitation, poaching, and disease. Although protected lands offer a refuge from some of these problems, they cannot protect all wildlife everywhere. In order for any animal to survive, it must be able to successfully overcome the constant challenges and threats of the world in which it lives. The presence of humans can often interfere with the daily routine of animals, causing them to flee, attack, abandon their young or habitat, or become dangerously attracted to human food or trash. For example, bears that begin to hang around campgrounds looking for food are often either removed or destroyed. For these reasons, outdoor recreators must act responsibly and learn to travel and camp in a way that will not disturb the surrounding wildlife.

AMC Guidelines:

- Always observe or photograph an animal from a safe, non-threatening distance. If an animal noticeably changes its behavior as you are watching it, you are too close! Back off until it resumes its former behavior.
- Be aware many larger mammals (for example, deer and moose) use human-made trails too. Often these trails are used because they present the path of least resistance. Always stay alert when traveling on trails, and move out of the way if an animal comes charging down the trail.
- Avoid quick movements and direct eye contact with animals at all times.
- As a general rule, travel quietly except when in bear country—in bear country make noise so bears will be aware of your presence and get out of your group's way.
- If you are traveling with any small children, make sure they too understand how to respect wildlife. Only bring pets with you if you know you can keep them under control at all times.
- Know the sensitive times (mating, nesting) and particular habitats of the animals in the areas where you wish to travel. Avoid these areas during those time periods.
- Consider how you will store your food, trash and any other "smelly" items so they aren't accessible to wildlife. Bear bags, bear canisters, bear boxes, critter hangs—all of these are options you may consider depending on where you are and when.

Principle 7: Be Considerate of Other Visitors

Why? Outdoor recreation is pursued by people of all types with all sorts of different motivations. Some seek solitude, others want companionship and social interaction. Because we must share the mountains, rivers, lakes, and forests with other outdoor enthusiasts, it is important we remember to practice common courtesy and respect our neighbors in this environment. When you are considerate of others, others will be considerate of you and your group, and all will be able to enjoy the wilderness in their own way.

AMC Guidelines:

- Always maintain a cooperative and friendly attitude with the people you meet on the trail, or near your campsite. Remember, in emergency situations, we rely on the people we run into for help.
- Keep your intuitive perception tuned in to your conversations with other outdoor enthusiasts—sometimes a friendly and inquisitive conversation is well-received. Others you meet may prefer the peace, quiet, and solitude of the wilderness.
- Instruct your group to step to the side of the trail as needed to let smaller or faster groups pass.
- If possible, take trail breaks and camp away from the sight of other visitors.
- Let nature's sounds prevail. Keep voices low and pets quiet. Turn down or mute electronic equipment and phones.
- Keep voices low and pets quiet—let this be a time to tune into nature.

Human Waste and Hygiene (i.e., Peeing & Pooping in the Woods)

Alright, perhaps some of you cringed when you read the above, but as a leader, taking a straightforward, perhaps even a bit of a humorous approach, to this topic can ease participant concerns and address an important issue. Human waste, if disposed of improperly, can be a significant source of contamination to water resources. It is also incredibly disturbing to find the equivalent of a messy, unsanitary bathroom in a wilderness setting.

Here are some basic tips to keep in mind:

- If there is an outhouse or composting toilet, use it. Be sure to read and follow any instructions provided and do not dispose of trash in outhouses or composting toilets.
- If there are no facilities, waste should be buried in a “cat hole,” about 6 inches deep, at least 200 feet away from any water, trail, or campsite.
- Whenever possible, stay 200 feet from water sources when you urinate.
- Buried toilet paper is often dug up by animals so it should be packed out in double zip-lock bags. If you feel adventurous, natural alternatives to toilet paper can be used—leaves, smooth rocks, sticks or snow can work well.

As a leader reading those words, you may, at this moment, be thinking, “What?! How can I ensure my group is comfortable with those practices?” First, think back to your planning & preparation for the trip, as well as any pre-trip screening you did. If your hike is geared toward more experienced participants, they are probably already familiar with the above practices. You are, as a leader, simply establishing one of the behavioral norms for your group by sharing this information.

However, if your trip is geared toward novices, then some additional suggestions may be helpful:

- When planning your trip, consider whether or not the start/end point(s) has a restroom. A privy, although it may not have running water, can make the outdoors more accessible for folks who don’t know much about the outdoors.
- Demo how to dig a cathole, and tips for squatting. Using a tree for balance, a log as a seat, or positioning a cat hole so you can lean against something as you squat, are all helpful pieces of information to share, esp. if someone has mobility issues and is concerned squatting may not be a feasible option.
- Depending on the length of your trip, you may also need to address gender-specific issues, like menstruation. Being aware of varying comfort levels & cultural differences in discussing these topics is important, so you may also want to consider the best way to facilitate those discussions.

Weather

Weather is an important factor in any outdoor activity. Being aware of the weather forecast and preparing your group accordingly will help make your trip more enjoyable and minimize risk. Before going on a trip, listen to the local television or radio forecasts. You can find excellent forecasts for your destination using the internet. If traveling in New Hampshire, the Mt. Washington Observatory's forecast for the White Mountains is available by calling the AMC at Pinkham Notch (603-466-2721) or online at <<https://www.mountwashington.org/experience-the-weather/regional-weather/>>. Remember, in case the weather is inclement or threatening, make sure participants know how to find out if you have canceled the trip or not.

As we all know, forecasts are not entirely accurate, especially in the mountains. You and your group must always be prepared for the worst possible conditions that may occur at a given time of year. You can stay one step ahead of the weather by paying attention to what is going on around you and applying some basic principles of meteorology. You can easily master these basic principles, but, like all rules, they are not always accurate. The more you know about the weather, the better off you will be and the more fun you are likely to have.

Rule #1: Mountains Often Cause Their Own Weather

When wind hits a mountainside, it meets a barrier. The mountain funnels the wind into valleys or forces it over the mountain or ridge top. If the wind goes over the mountain, its speed increases, the air cools, and moisture may begin to condense.

Rule #2: The Higher You Go, The Cooler It Gets! (Usually)

The *adiabatic lapse rate* states that for every 1,000 foot elevation gain there will be a cooling of 3 to 5 degrees Fahrenheit. The exact lapse rate depends on whether you are above or below the dew point. As you climb, prepare for cooler temperatures.

Rule #1 showed when wind hits a mountainside, the mountain forces it up and over. As the air goes up, it cools off and moisture in it may condense, forming a fog or a cloud, or increasing the size of existing clouds. As the moist, hot air cools, it condenses and forms water droplets on cooler surfaces. If the mountains cause the air to cool enough and if the air contains enough moisture, it will condense, causing rain or snow if the right conditions exist. Because of the exposure to high winds, cooler temperatures and lightning, move your group off peaks and ridges at the sight of bad weather.

One exception to Rule #2 is a *temperature inversion*. An inversion usually happens on a clear, still night because cool air sinks down into valleys. During a temperature inversion, if you stay higher on a mountain, you can experience temperatures up to 20 degrees Fahrenheit warmer than in the valley.

Rule #3: A Falling Barometer Can Spell Trouble

A change in barometric pressure over several hours usually indicates a change in the weather. Of course, knowing this isn't going to do you much good in the field unless you

bring your own barometer (a somewhat unreasonable idea). A more practical option is the pocket altimeter. An altimeter can help you figure out your location and tell you about the trend in barometric pressure. Generally high, steady barometric pressure indicates good weather. Falling barometric pressure indicates bad weather is coming, and rising barometric pressure indicates improving conditions. Good altimeters are somewhat expensive, however they can prove highly valuable and fun to learn and use.

Rule #4: Fronts Bring Bad Weather

A front is the dividing line between two air masses, one of which pushes the other out of its way. Fronts are often associated with bad weather and high winds. When a cold front moves in, cold air forces out warmer air. Similarly, when a warm front moves in, warm air forces out cold air. Cold fronts move relatively quickly (up to 35 mph) and often cause rapid and dramatic storms. These may not last as long as the warm front, but they pack a real punch in many cases. Thunder and lightning are not uncommon and those towering thunderheads (cumulonimbus clouds) are most often associated with a cold front. Warm fronts, on the other hand, tend to last longer and are not usually as dramatic (long rainy days). Warm fronts give more advanced warning (by high, thin clouds) than cold fronts and take longer to clear out.

Rule #5: Forecasting Means Noticing Weather Changes Throughout The Day

To stay one step ahead of the weather, keep an eye on the clouds and notice what they are doing. Are those fluffy cumulus clouds you saw in the morning getting larger, growing significantly by 1 or 2 PM? If so, they may well produce showers. Are the thin wispy cirrus clouds that seemed so high earlier, bunching together and thickening? Is the cloud ceiling lowering during the day? If the answer is yes to any of these questions, something is up and it is probably not going to lead to lots of sunshine.

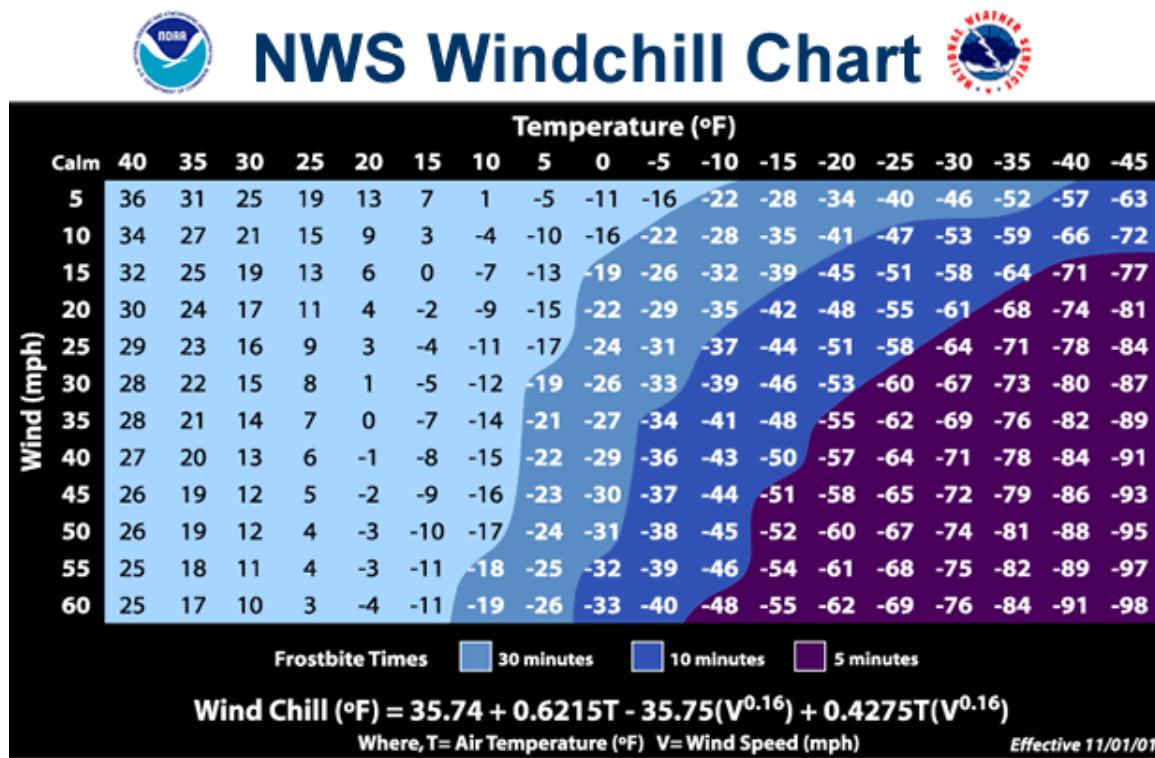
Also, consider the direction or change in the direction of the wind. The weather in the Northeast is mainly continental; the predominant wind direction is westerly (from the West). Westerly winds generally give us fine weather, though plenty of storms come on this wind, too. A southerly wind could spell trouble: warm moist air may be moving north. A northerly wind, or a change to a northeasterly wind, indicates bad weather is a strong possibility. The Northeast is famous for its Nor'easters (low pressure storms centered just off the coast which deposit large amounts of snow or rain). In 1968, a series of these storms left the winter snowfall on Mt. Washington at a high of 566 inches (47 feet, 2 inches) for the season.

Weather Summary

Northeast weather can change dramatically in a relatively short time. Because of this, one must ***always be prepared!*** **Ample warm clothing, rain gear and wind protection are a must any time of the year.** Good wind protection will save you from the cooling effects of wind chill.

To maximize your forecasting abilities, you must be aware of the ever changing environment around you. Continual awareness of the sometimes subtle changes in cloud formations and wind direction will give you the edge you need. If the weather starts changing, let the group members know so they can be ready to put on their rain or wind gear, or understand the need to turn back early if that is the best option for the safety of the group.

Proficiency in weather forecasting comes with practice. Get a cloud and wind chart, use your compass to determine wind direction changes, and keep your eye on the elements. Besides being practical, you can have fun teaching this skill to participants.



Source: <http://www.weather.gov/os/windchill/index.shtml>

Lightning

Prior Planning

- ⚡ **Examine Route** – Determine if there are areas of high risk (See section below). Plan bail out points if there are parts of the route exposed to higher than normal lightning danger.
- ⚡ **Weather Report** – Obtain one if possible and consider modifying your plan if the forecast calls for thunderstorms.
- ⚡ **Daily Pattern** – Thunderstorms in the Northeast generally do not follow predictable patterns like those in the Rocky Mountains. However, thunderstorms do tend to build with increased temperature and humidity and are more likely to occur in the afternoon.

Location During a Lightning Storm

- ⚡ **Avoid** – Peaks, ridges and other high points, open bodies of water, shallow caves and drainage bottoms (wet or dry).
- ⚡ **Other Potentially Dangerous Areas** – Wet or lichen covered rock, cracks or crevices in rock, wet ropes and tree roots can all serve as conductors.
- ⚡ **Head For** – Wooded areas with trees of generally equal height. Position yourself equidistant between trees of approximately equal height. Avoid the tallest trees. Valleys (but not drainage bottoms) and low on slopes are better than most locations higher up. If you are out on the water, head for shore.
- ⚡ **If Caught in the Open** – Utilize likely strike points as a means of protection. Locate a tree, pinnacle or other point that is 5 or more times your height. Estimate the height of the object and position yourself approximately 50% of that distance from the base of the object. Avoid being the highest point in the vicinity.

As a Storm Approaches

- ⚡ **Monitor** – Keep a diligent eye on the approach of weather systems. Learn to identify the cumulonimbus clouds likely to produce lightning discharges.
- ⚡ **Flash to Crash** – When you see lightning begin counting off the seconds until you hear thunder. The light reaches you almost immediately, however the sound travels more slowly. The sound of thunder takes approximately 5 seconds to travel 1 mile – dividing your second count by 5 gives the approximate distance of the storm in miles. For example, if you see lightning, count 15 seconds, and then hear thunder, divide 15/5. The T-storm is about 3 miles away.
- ⚡ **Head to Safer Areas** – Generally it is advisable to head for safer areas if you feel a thunder storm may be approaching. If your route takes you into an exposed area, this is likely the time to alter your plan.

“Lightning Drill”

- ⚡ **Two to Three Miles Away** – At this distance (based on your second count) a group should enter into a “lightning drill.” Three miles (15 seconds) is the standard for many outdoor recreation programs in the US.
- ⚡ **Ideal “Drill”** – This consists of squatting on insulating material (if available), heels touching, knees apart and hands off the ground. You should be in this position when

the storm is at its closest. The insulating material might be a sleeping pad, a pack or a coiled climbing rope.

- **Sitting** – The duration of the storm may make it difficult to squat the whole time, thus individuals may choose to sit when the storm is not immediately on top of them.
- **Spread Out** – Groups should spread out to reduce the likelihood of more than one person being affected by a strike. Everyone should be within audio or visual contact of other group members.
- **Location, Location** – Lightning drills should be conducted in safer areas of terrain, as outlined above. When caught in a highly exposed area, it is usually advisable to continue travel to a safer area (if one is nearby) rather than enter into a lightning drill.
- **Hypothermia** – This is a real concern during lightning drills. Make sure everyone has raingear and, if necessary, insulating layers. Snacks and water should be available.
- **Falling Objects** – Be aware of dead trees or branches close to your location that might get blown down.
- **Holding Tight** – If the group is in a tent or under a tarp in an ideal location, it may be advisable to remain dry and sheltered.
- **Metal** – Avoid any contact with metal, which can cause serious burns if it is exposed to current.

If Lightning Strikes -- First Aid

- **Pulse & Breathing** – If a patient has no pulse provide CPR (chest compressions and rescue breathing). For the patient with a pulse who is not breathing, provide rescue breathing. Spontaneous resuscitation is more likely after a lightning strike than with other causes of loss of circulation or respiration. Wilderness protocols instruct to continue CPR for as long as is feasible for the rescuers.
- **Burns & Trauma** – Both are common in lightning victims. Evaluate and treat accordingly.
- **Evacuate** – Carefully decide on a safe and expedient evacuation plan.



Behind the Guidelines

Lightning is a real hazard for the outdoor enthusiast. The highest concentrations of lightning injuries occur high in mountainous areas and on large bodies of water. A majority of the 200-300 lightning fatalities in the US each year are people who were engaged in recreational activities. On the positive side, most of those affected by lightning are not killed, and many are not seriously injured.

A knowledge of lightning, and prudent decision-making, eliminate much of the risk associated with lightning. It is useful to plan for possible lightning in advance and to practice re-analyzing your situation once out in the field. The differential between the speed of light and the slower speed of sound make it possible to learn the approximate distance of any given storm. Use the distance of the storm and observations on its movement to create a plan of action.

The highest object in a given area is the most likely to be struck by lightning, thus many of the guidelines above are an attempt to keep people from being that high point. The lightning drill is important in that the insulating material may help protect a person in the event of lightning splash or ground transfer. The squatting position allows current to flow through the lower body without running through the heart. Many lightning strikes have effected more than one person, thus it is critically important to spread out to avoid this situation.

It is important to remember most lightning victims are not exposed to a direct strike. A person can come into contact with lightning four different ways:

1. Direct Hit
2. Ground Transfer – Electrical energy, dissipating outward from the object it hits, flows through the ground and potentially those nearby.
3. “Splash” – Lightning hits another object and splashes onto objects or people nearby.
4. Direct Transmission – Lightning hits an object the person is in contact with and current is transferred.

Those who do not suffer the effects of a direct strike are far more likely to recover. Lightning knocks many victims into unconsciousness or may otherwise effect their level of consciousness. Victims may also suffer paralysis of extremities, ruptured eardrums, and, of course, burns. Treat these conditions as outlined above, but keep in mind that the electrical current which caused the heart to stop or breathing to stop may not have permanently damaged the organs. Unless it is dangerous or you are completely exhausted, do not stop CPR or rescue breathing on a lightning victim.

A commonly repeated story from the North Carolina Outward Bound School illustrates the benefits of rescue breathing and being prepared. This particular course was caught on a ridge in a storm and both instructors were knocked unconscious by ground transfer lightning. Luckily the instructors, who were not breathing, had just taught their students rescue breathing and CPR (as is required on US Outward Bound courses). The students performed rescue breathing on their instructors and both spontaneously began breathing within a short period of time.

First Aid and Accident Scene Management

This handbook is not designed to cover all aspects of first aid and accident management. Anyone venturing away from the 911 safety net should pursue training in wilderness first aid—a course teaching a systematic response to emergency situations. A systematic approach and role playing scenarios are emphasized in all of the nationally available wilderness first aid trainings.

Wilderness First Aid (WFA) is the most basic level of training, and is generally taught as a two day, hands-on course. Wilderness First Responder (WFR), an eight to ten day course is generally accepted as the minimum training for professional outdoor leaders. Other trainings available include Wilderness Advanced First Aid, a four day course, and Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician (WEMT), the most rigorous training. These courses are far superior to standard first aid courses for dealing with emergencies in backcountry and some rural situations. This type of “wilderness” training can also be very useful for those venturing to nations with less developed emergency medical care systems.

Contact your AMC chapter or camp for information on trainings in your region, or check the listings in the AMC’s Activity Database. The remainder of this section contains some basic principles of emergency response and suggestions for the first aid kit all backcountry travelers should carry.

Principles of Wilderness Rescues

Every individual engaged in an outdoor activity group should carry an individual first aid kit and one person in every group, usually the leader, should carry a group first aid kit.

- Your first aid kit should not contain items you don’t know how to use.
- Your first aid kit should ideally contain items that either serve multiple uses or can’t be improvised.
- There is no perfect first aid kit – there is **ALWAYS** a compromise in space, weight, usefulness, and cost.
- Don’t be afraid to carry a first aid booklet – even if you are well trained, no one’s memory is perfect.
- Carry a pen or pencil and a first aid report form or blank paper. Write down as much information as possible while you are administering care to a patient.
- Be Prepared to improvise what you don’t have available in your kit.
- Items can change seasonally, with the location and duration of trip – for example, you probably don’t need to carry a cold compress in the winter (since you could substitute a zip-lock bag full of snow)
- Your first aid kit should be crush proof and water proof and be able to withstand abuse – start with a heavy duty nylon fanny pack and pack items inside it in freezer-type zip-lock plastic bags.
- Most items will remain usable over long periods of time, but you should check expiration dates periodically.
- If you carry medications, make sure they are labeled.

- A useful first aid kit can take a long time to develop. Add things you wished you had from the last time you needed the kit and remove things you have never used.
- Commercial kits are expensive, and sometimes have things you won't need or can't use, but they might be a good compromise if you don't know where to start. Better yet, buy the case empty and stock it yourself.
- First aid kits don't save lives. It's the skill and training of the user that will make the difference.
- Keep a checklist of items in your kit, review the contents and refill if necessary immediately after each trip.
- Carry the **AMC's Crisis Communication Chart** (located at the back of this handbook) with you on all AMC trips. As a trip leader, you should initiate this communication in case of a large-scale emergency (ie. a fatality, an large-scale rescue

Incident Documentation

If an accident should occur on an AMC trip, there are several documents that need to be filled out either during or after the accident. It is recommended that you keep several copies of each in your First Aid Kit during AMC trips. Electronic copies of AMC forms can be found online at the Volunteer Resources Page: <https://www.outdoors.org/volunteer/volunteer-resources?tab=3>.



Patient Care Form

This form is the AMC version of the SOAP note used by all emergency response teams. You can use this AMC version or another version that you are accustomed to—however, you should document your actions. This form also helps leaders to remember their medical training during the excitement of an accident as it helps prompt the rescuers to perform a head to toe survey, take vital signs, etc.

Volunteer Incident Report Form

This form should be filled out by a trip leader whenever an accident occurs on an AMC trip that causes a participant to leave an activity before its' conclusion, be evacuated by an AMC group or an outside rescue team, and/or seek medical attention afterwards. This form asks relevant questions regarding the injury/illness as well as about some factors which may have contributed to the incident. This form should be submitted to the AMC's Risk Management Manager as soon as possible after an accident. The AMC is aware accidents happen on AMC trips. This form is not intended to bring the trip leader's decisions or leadership into question. Rather, its primary use is to collect accident data club-wide in order to establish accident trends that can be highlighted for current and future trip leaders via training and materials.

Hypothermia and Hyperthermia

HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia—the lowering of one's internal body temperature—is the number one cause of accidents and deaths in the backcountry. We are warm-blooded animals and we require a constant body temperature to insure our survival. Doing this in our day-to-day life is usually pretty easy: if we are cold, we turn up the heat; if we get wet, we go to the closet and change our clothes. These luxuries do not exist in the backcountry. The lowering of normal body temperature from 98.6 degrees to 97 or 96 degrees can make a backpacker confused or disoriented; further lowering of body temperature to 95 or 94 degrees can be fatal. Initial identification and prompt action are the keys to preventing hypothermia from taking another victim. Remember, hypothermia occurs in all four seasons; it is 100% preventable and 100% treatable if recognized in time.

Preventing heat loss can be done in a variety of ways

- Controlling convection - wear wind and rain gear to prevent wind currents from transporting the heat away from you
- Controlling evaporation - sweating leads to a wet body and a wet body is a cold body. It is important to maintain a warm, dry body by not overheating and sweating through clothing. To control evaporation, reduce the amount of insulation or ventilate your insulation and/or wind and rain barrier
- Controlling radiation - prevent your body from radiating its heat to the surrounding air. Insulate the total body, especially the head, with the proper fibers. We lose a large quantity of heat from unprotected areas of our body, and a hat is an easy item to add/remove during active pursuits.
- Controlling conduction - eliminate the transfer of your body heat to heat sucking objects around you. Avoid sitting or sleeping on cold, wet ground unless you are on an insulating pad.

Symptoms of hypothermia are not always apparent, even to the most experienced backpacker. Some symptoms such as irritability, lack of concentration and clumsiness are inherent in all hikers, particularly late in the day. At its beginning stages, hypothermia can be treated with a handful of GORP, some warm, high-calorie fluids and an extra layer of clothing. Symptoms of moderate to severe hypothermia come quickly, sometimes in less than 30 minutes, and will include uncontrollable shivering, slurred speech, and loss of fine motor coordination eventually advancing to physical collapse, unresponsiveness, cessation of shivering, unconsciousness and decreased pulse and respiration.

The best first aid for hypothermia is prevention. If you and your group are dry, well hydrated, well fed, and physically active, you should not need to provide more extensive care.

The first step in prevention and treating the initial stages of hypothermia include the following:

- Eat a mix of foods high in calories
- Drink warm beverages high in calories
- Change into dry clothing
- Keep moving if possible

Physical activity, like hiking, will often generate enough heat to rewarm mild to moderate hypothermia. However, don't expect a hungry and dehydrated hiker to want to keep moving. Generally hypothermic victims oppose this suggestion, wanting to sit and rest a while. Resist this temptation and move the group forward. Even if the group is wet, at least they will be generating warmth through movement. Providing high caloric food and hydration, especially a warm beverage, is important too. Most people who spend time in the backcountry will, at some point, personally experience hypothermia. Every backcountry leader needs to become familiar with its symptoms and basic treatments. Remember: well-fed, well-hydrated, well-dressed groups are less likely to fall prey to hypothermia.

HYPERTHERMIA

Hyperthermia is the opposite of hypothermia. Next to oxygen, water is most important element in sustaining life. We are approximately 30% fluid by weight. A loss of a small percent of body fluids, as little as 2-3%, will decrease the working effectiveness of our musculoskeletal system by 20% to 30%. The average backpacker needs to consume approximately four quarts of fluid each day for optimal performance. Four quarts is a minimum; some backpackers may require as much as eight. The suggested consumption regime is one quart with breakfast, two quarts during the day and one to two quarts in the evening. In the summer, the hot temperatures encourage us to drink and the risks of dehydration are much more apparent to us. Dehydration, along with a warm environment and/or high humidity, can lead to hyperthermia. Staying hydrated helps hikers maintain their regular body temperature during the physical exertion of an outdoor trip. A well-hydrated participant also remains lucid, an important criteria for good decision-making in the backcountry.

The primary causes of heat-related (hyperthermia) injuries are:

- **Dehydration:** The importance of hydration was emphasized above. Excessive dehydration from sweating, coupled with salt loss, can have severe consequences;
- **Exertion:** Physical activity in very warm/hot temperatures; and
- **Environmental Conditions:** Air temperatures greater than 90°F drastically reduce the body's ability to shed heat through radiation. Normally, 65% of heat loss occurs through radiation. Relative humidity above 75% drastically reduces the body's ability to release heat through perspiration (sweat doesn't evaporate off the skin). Normally 20% of heat loss occurs due to sweating.

PREVENTION:

- **Drink water:** The best prevention for dehydration is consistently drinking water throughout the day. Water is the recommended source of fluid. It is the easiest for the body to absorb. However, salty snacks and/or a drink mix, like Gatorade, can also help mitigate the effects of salt-loss.
- **Rest:** To minimize the effects of the heat and/or humidity, and to allow for rehydration en route.
- **Shade:** Use any shade available. This can include advising participants to wear hats, or perhaps setting up a tarp for man-made shade during longer breaks.

Prevention, and recognizing the early signs of hyperthermia, are the keys to managing heat-related injuries. Untreated heat-related injuries can result in a life-threatening situations.

Advanced Dehydration/Heat Exhaustion

Symptoms

- Weak, thirsty, headache, nausea, possible vomiting, cramps, disorientation
- Reddening of skin on face and extremities
- Skin is pale, cool and clammy to the touch (or warm and flushed, due to the reaction to the heat as mentioned above)

First Aid

- Rest: A long rest is advisable to allow the patient to recover and hydrate;
- Shade: If shade is available, use it; if not, construct some shade using a tent fly or other available material;
- Cool the patient's body: The body cannot tolerate high temperatures for a long period of time; decreasing the body temperature of this individual is a priority. Applying cool, wet cloths to the person's body, or dribbling water on to the skin and then fanning help the body to regulate its temperature; and
- Water - Start with small sips, work up to larger amounts over a period of several hours. This is to prevent vomiting which often happens when a severely dehydrated individual takes large amounts of fluid in a short time. An electrolyte mix, like diluted Gatorade, will also help the body to rehydrate.

Severe Dehydration/Heat Stroke –

A life threatening situation that appears in two forms: (1) Classic heat stroke whereby perspiration ceases due to dehydration or (2) Exertional heat stroke (air is too hot and humid for an individual's heat loss mechanisms to work effectively). **This is a life-threatening situation.**

Symptoms

- Rapid pulse and ventilations
- Disoriented, confused, possible hallucinations, person may lose consciousness
- Skin may be red, hot and dry (classic) OR skin may be red, hot and sweaty (exertional)
- Seizures possible

First Aid

The body cannot tolerate high temperatures for a long period of time -- rapid cooling off of this individual must be accomplished rapidly.

- Place patient in cool, shady area;
- Cool immediately by soaking the patient's clothing and body and then fanning. The fanning action helps speed up the evaporation process, allow the body to cool. If the person begins to shiver, stop cooling until the shivering stops, and then resume treatment.
- If conscious (or a person regains consciousness), begin treating with small amounts of fluid. Be cautious not to bring the persons temperature to a hypothermic stage by over cooling.
- Evacuate the patient.

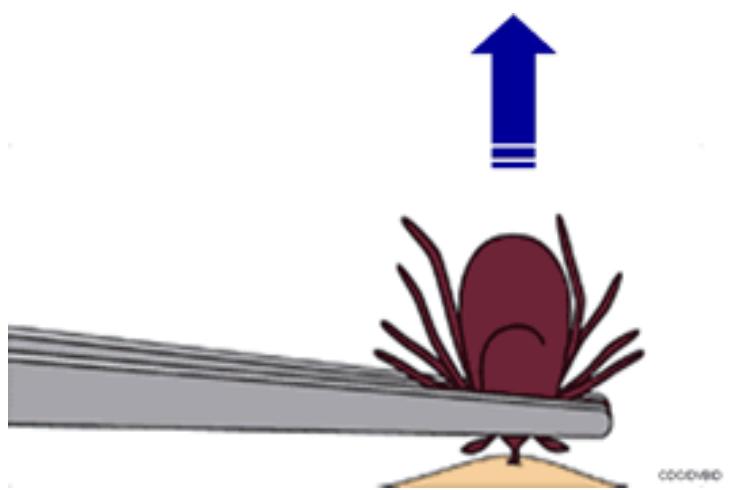
Mosquitoes and Ticks

Although there are many insects that can bite, the two most common “enemies” of the insect world for the New England and mid-Atlantic states are mosquitoes and ticks. Our eastern United States mosquitoes can transmit West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). Deer ticks in the East may transmit Lyme Disease. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), every state in the Northeast has reported cases of Lyme. As a trip leader, you may want to share some of these prevention tips with your participants during screening or at the trailhead:

- Mosquitoes are most active at dawn & dusk and after dark. You will encounter fewer mosquitoes if you plan your activities for the middle of the day.
- Wear long pants, long shirts, and boots--not sandals--when traveling through tall grasses or tight forest.
- Tuck in your shirts and pull socks over pant legs to minimize the chances of ticks finding skin.
- Avoid fragrances in shampoos, body wash, and perfume as they attract mosquitoes.
- If you want to protect against ticks and mosquitoes, consider using an insect repellent with a concentration of 30% or less DEET or Permethrin (for clothing and gear ONLY). Make sure to follow the manufacturer's directions, avoid the eyes, mouth, and hands, and wash off the repellent as soon as possible.
- Avoid wearing bright colors or florals and opt for light colors like khaki, beige, and olive.
- Encourage participants to bath or shower within several hours of completing the activity if possible. This helps wash off and find ticks.
- Remind participants to inspect gear and clothing. Ticks can ride home on these items and then attach to the individual later.
- Ticks need to be engorged in your skin for 36-48 hours before they transmit Lyme disease—encourage your participants to do a tick check at the end of the trip or, if on a longer trip, every 12 hours.

If a tick is found, remove the tick immediately:

- Using fine-pointed tweezers, grasp the tick firmly (but without crushing) as close to the head as possible. Then pull straight up away from the skin.
- Avoid crushing the body of the tick, using petroleum, or attempting to use a lit match to remove the tick. These methods traumatize the tick and its stomach contents are more likely to end up in your wound.
- After the tick is removed, wash the area with warm water and soap. Alcohol can also be used to clean the area around the bite.



www.atlanticpestsolutions.net/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/TickRemoval.gif

Symptoms of Lyme disease

As previously noted, a tick must be engorged in the skin for at least 36-48 hours before it is able to transmit the disease. After transmission, the first sign for many victims is a “bull’s eye” rash—a circular rash that can expand over the course of several days, sometimes to the width of 12”. This rash occurs in 70-80% of Lyme disease victims. The other symptoms of Lyme disease include: chills, fever, joint pain, headache, fatigue, and swollen lymph nodes.

Lyme disease is often successfully treated with antibiotics. Untreated victims can have more severe and systemic symptoms such as shooting pains, stiff muscles, and irregular heartbeats.

As a leader, especially on multi-day trips, letting participants know about some of these symptoms can help catch the early signs.

Sources for additional reading:

US EPA, <http://epa.gov/pesticides/insect/safe.htm>

U.S. FDA <http://www.fda.gov/Drugs/EmergencyPreparedness/ucm085277.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/>

Frequently Asked Questions About Liability Protection for AMC Volunteer Trip Leaders

1. How am I protected from liability should something go wrong on one of my trips?

As a volunteer trip leader with the AMC, you are afforded many layers of protection that would not be in place if you led trips outside the AMC umbrella. The following structures are in place to protect you (and the AMC more broadly) from liability:

- **Your training and experience** – your training and experience as an AMC volunteer trip leader will help to prevent accidents from happening and will minimize negative outcomes should an accident occur.
- **Federal Volunteer Protection Act** – The Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 states that no volunteer may be held liable for harm caused by an act or omission if the volunteer was acting within the scope of his/her responsibilities. Protection from liability is not afforded if there is: gross negligence, criminal acts or reckless misconduct, or in the case of injuries caused by operating a motor vehicle that requires a license and insurance to operate, if the volunteer was under the influence of drugs or alcohol at the time of the act, or if the volunteer receives compensation for volunteering, in-kind or otherwise, that exceeds \$500 annually.
- **Acknowledgement of risks** – all participants must be made aware of the inherent and specific risks they may encounter on a given AMC trip. They are made aware of these risks via the Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks & Release Agreement (aka the Volunteer Release Agreement) and via a verbal statement about risk given by the volunteer trip leader at the start of any activity. When participants have an accurate picture of the risks inherent to a trip, they are far less likely to seek damages should an accident occur.
- **Agreement not to sue** – in signing the Volunteer Release Agreement, all participants are agreeing not to sue the AMC, which includes its volunteer leaders. More specifically, they are agreeing not to sue the AMC for damages resulting from negligence, though if they believe gross negligence has been committed, they have the right to file a lawsuit.
- **Agreement to file suit in Massachusetts** – in signing the Volunteer Release Agreement, all participants are agreeing that if they file a suit against the AMC, they will do so in the state of Massachusetts, no matter where the damage occurred, where the participant lives, or where the accused person lives. In addition to being the state in which the AMC is headquartered, Massachusetts has a strong case law history upholding the validity of release agreements.
- **AMC Insurance** – all volunteer leaders are protected by the AMC's general liability insurance. So long as the volunteer leader is acting within the Leadership Requirements and Guidelines, he/she will be afforded legal counsel, court fees, and damage awards provided by the AMC's insurance.

2. Is a non-publicized event covered by AMC insurance?

This depends on the nature of the non-publicized event. If it is an approved Club trip that does not appear in a Club publication for some reason, it will still be covered as long as the sponsoring Club unit keeps a log consisting of the dates of approval, the date of the activity, the leader, as well as the kind and general location of the event. However, a group of AMC friends who go out on their own on a "bootleg trip" that is not officially approved or sponsored by any Club unit is not covered by the Club's insurance.

3. Are trip leaders covered under AMC's insurance policies for drive time, i.e., shuttling participants to and from trip sites while using personal or borrowed vehicles?

No. The AMC's liability insurance does not protect leaders from liability in the case of motor vehicle accidents – motor vehicle travel is outside the scope of AMC-sanctioned activities. Thus, any leader or participant who drives others in his/her car must be familiar with and comfortable with the limits of their own personal insurance policy.

4. Are trip leaders covered for injuries to themselves which require medical care?

No. Trip leaders should carry and be comfortable with the limits of their own personal health insurance.



Appalachian Mountain Club

Outdoor Leadership Development Committee
Originally Issued by OLDC on April 24th, 2004 &
Approved by Board of Directors on May 6th, 2004

Revised January 24, 2015
Effective March 15, 2015

Leadership Requirements and Guidelines

The Outdoor Leadership Development Committee (OLDC) is a Club-wide committee composed of AMC volunteers and staff representing a variety of Club Units. The OLDC was formed with the task of developing, publishing, monitoring, and modifying requirements and guidelines for the volunteer Leaders of the AMC and the groups that recruit, train and sponsor those Leaders. The overarching goal of the OLDC in creating and maintaining these requirements and guidelines is to further the enjoyment of our members and the public through ensuring that safety and quality are priorities on all AMC volunteer-led Activities.

This document will be formally reviewed by the OLDC beginning three years or earlier if necessary after the most recent effective date and changes will be made as necessary. The OLDC welcomes questions, comments and feedback regarding this document at <leadership@outdoors.org>.

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Introduction and Definitions

This document establishes requirements and guidelines for volunteer units of the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) and for its Leaders. Requirements, guidelines and several other important terms used throughout this document are defined here.

- **Requirements** are the minimum standards that must be met by all Club Units and Leaders. Club Units may impose additional requirements appropriate to their Activities, but may not waive any requirement in this document without the permission of the OLDC. Failure of any individual to meet these requirements may result in loss of coverage by the AMC's general liability insurance policy.
- **Guidelines** are further standards that should be met by all Club Units and Leaders. There are some instances in which it may not be possible or in the best interest of Activity participants for a Leader to meet these standards because of the nature of the Activity or situations arising while the Activity is in progress. Excluding those instances, Leaders should meet these guidelines at all times in order to maintain high standards of quality Activity leadership.
- A **Club Unit** is any official volunteer committee of the AMC. This includes each chapter (e.g. Berkshire, Boston, Connecticut), committees within the chapters (e.g. Delaware Valley Backpacking Committee, Maine Conservation Committee, Mohawk Hudson Trails Committee), club-wide committees (e.g. Adventure Travel, Interchapter Paddling Committee) and Volunteer Managed Facilities committees (e.g. August Camp Committee, Fire Island Committee, Noble View Committee).
- A **Leader** is any person authorized by an AMC Club unit to lead or assist in the leadership of an AMC Activity.
- An **Activity** is any outing, trip, event, etc. sponsored by a Club Unit. For an Activity to be an official AMC Activity, it must exist according to the qualifications set forth in this document. For the purposes of this document, social events, meetings, basic services and meals (i.e. potluck dinners, picnics, barbecues, cocktail hours, slide shows, speaker presentations, facility stays, equipment rental) are exempt from the requirements of this document and do NOT necessarily need to meet the requirements and guidelines listed here.
- The **Outdoor Leadership Development Committee** (OLDC) is a group chartered by AMC's Board of Directors to assist the AMC in developing requirements and guidelines for high quality volunteer-led Activities. Requests for changes or amendments to this document should be submitted to the OLDC at <leadership@outdoors.org>.

In all instances, the AMC places the physical well being of Activity participants first, regardless of the requirements and guidelines listed in this document, including those associated with insurance coverage.

Liability Insurance Coverage

The AMC maintains a general liability insurance policy insuring the Club and its Leaders against damages arising out of acts of authorized persons in furtherance of official Club Activities. The liability policy includes coverage for defense costs.

- To be personally covered by AMC's liability insurance policy **Leaders** must be current AMC members acting in accordance with the requirements set forth in this document and they must be leading an approved AMC Activity as set forth in the section "Requirements for Activities."
- **Other persons** who are appointed by the designated Leader(s) to perform an assistant leader function(s) (sub-group leader, registrar, lead, sweep, first aid care provider) are also covered, whether these leaders are AMC members or not.
- Persons or business that an AMC member-Leader contracts with or hires as a **third party**, to provide expertise, facilities, transportation, services or equipment for an activity, are **NOT COVERED** by the AMC liability insurance. Anyone hired as a third party should have adequate insurance. In addition, Leaders who contract privately with a third party to take over leadership or instructional roles should obtain a certificate of insurance from the third party with the AMC listed as a named insured, although in some instances this may not be feasible for overseas Activities.

Requirements for Club Units

These requirements are the minimum standards that must be met by all Club Units. Club Units may impose additional requirements appropriate to their Activities, but may not waive any requirement in this document without the permission of the OLDC.

Approval of Activities

- Club Units must designate one or more persons for the purpose of approving Activities sponsored by that Club Unit.
- Club Units sponsoring Activities involving outside organizations must ensure that the jointly sponsored activity meets the standards of the sponsoring Club Unit and has an approved AMC Leader.
- Club Units must ensure that the Activities they sponsor are led by one or more individuals approved as Leaders for that Activity.
- If a Club Unit sponsors Activities that require Leaders to collect money from participants, that Club Unit must have a clear policy governing Activity finances. This policy may or may not include reimbursing Leaders for trip expenses and/or providing for free trips for Leaders. This policy may NOT include any compensation for Leaders BEYOND direct reimbursement for trip expenses and/or a free trip. Club Units are also authorized to charge service fees to Activity participants to reimburse the Club Unit for the costs of providing Activities. As necessary, these services may include expenses such as advertising, printing, postage, training, equipment provided, etc.
- Club Units may sponsor the following Activities:

Camping, backpacking, hiking, walking, trail running, bicycling, canoeing, kayaking, rafting, fishing, trail maintenance and construction, equipment maintenance, facility maintenance and construction, stewardship projects, conservation activities, ice climbing, mountaineering, rock climbing, leadership and/or outdoor skills training, orienteering, recreational team sports, social and educational activities, dancing, yoga or other organized exercise classes, cooking, in-line skating, ice skating, sailing (boats 26 feet and under only), snow skiing, snowshoeing, snowboarding, sledding, dog sledding, swimming, snorkeling, and windsurfing.

Additional activities may be sponsored (e.g. horseback riding, caving), but are first subject to approval by the OLDC, the insurance carrier, and the Leadership & Risk Management Department.

- Club Units may not sponsor the following activities:

SCUBA diving, sailing (boats over 26 feet), bungee jumping, flying of any kind including skydiving, hang gliding, parasailing, and parapenting

- Club Units are authorized to approve activities within the fields of expertise of their approved Leaders, as long as the Activity does not require travel to a location greater than 500 miles from any Chapter's jurisdiction, or exceed 10 days in duration. Activities in excess of 500 miles from the AMC region or longer than 10 days shall be classified as Adventure Travel and must be approved by the Adventure Travel Committee.

Leadership

- A Club Unit will establish leadership qualification criteria for Activities it sponsors. These criteria must include one or both of the following: (a) successful completion of leadership training as determined by the trainers or instructors; (b) demonstration of leadership skills developed inside or outside the AMC (e.g. previous leadership experience, co-leads with experienced Leaders, etc.). The sponsoring Club Unit may require additional criteria.
- The sponsoring Club Unit must make reasonable efforts to ensure that all Leaders possess the requisite technical skills for the activity that it approves through the Club Unit's established leadership qualification criteria or by additional means.
- According to its established criteria, a sponsoring Club Unit will grant, change, or rescind leadership status for those persons leading Activities that fall within the purview of that Club Unit.
- At its discretion, a sponsoring Club Unit may rescind the leadership status of an individual in response to safety and/or quality problems on Activities. Once an individual's leadership status has been rescinded in this manner, the Club Unit must immediately report this information to the leader and to the OLDC via the Leadership and Risk Management Department at 10 City Square, Boston, MA 02129 or leadership@outdoors.org.

- A sponsoring Club Unit must maintain a roster of its qualified Leaders including name, address, membership number, expiration date, phone number and email (if available). This roster must be provided at least once per year to the OLDC via the Volunteer Relations Department at 10 City Square, Boston, MA 02129 or leadership@outdoors.org.

Communication

- Announcements of Activities must be screened to determine that they meet these requirements and may only be submitted to by persons designated for that purpose by the sponsoring Club Unit.
- In the event of a reportable accident or incident (described below in *Requirements for Leaders*), the activity Leader(s), sponsoring activity committee chair(s), chapter chair, and regional director shall cooperate with the Leadership and Risk Management Department in providing background information and reports regarding such event as may be requested by the Club's legal counsel or the Leadership and Risk Management Department. Those directly involved with the event should refer inquiries to the Leadership and Risk Management Department for an official statement by the Club and should avoid giving statements to the press or making public statements.

Club Units are encouraged to develop a process to manage complaints, disputes and issues related to their operations. Criteria which could result in a conflict, dispute or incident shifting from management at the local club unit level to a Club-wide committee include:

- Illegal acts or allegations of illegal acts
- Police actions
- Circumstances involving allegations of discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age or physical disability
- Circumstances or incidents involving litigation or threats of litigation
- Issues or conflicts with the potential to have a significant detrimental impact on the AMC's reputation

Guidelines for Club Units

One of the major responsibilities of Club Units is to develop new Leaders and enhance the skills of existing Leaders by offering opportunities for leadership training.

Recommended Elements of Leadership Training:

- Activity planning and management
- Screening of potential participants for an Activity
- Leadership responsibilities including risk management and leadership styles
- People skills including group dynamics and communication
- Dealing with emergencies, accident scene management
- AMC leadership philosophy regarding environment and conservation
- Leadership Requirements and Guidelines

Requirements for Leaders

These requirements are the minimum standards that must be met by all Leaders. Club Units may impose additional requirements appropriate to their Activities, but may not waive any requirement in this document without the permission of the OLDC. Failure of any individual to meet these requirements may result in loss of coverage by the AMC's general liability insurance policy.

Basic Requirements

- Leaders must be eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- Leaders must maintain current AMC membership.
- When leading an Activity that requires collection of money from participants, Leaders must follow the financial policy of the sponsoring Club Unit.
- Leaders must make reasonable efforts to ensure that their Activity meets the *Requirement for Activities* as described below.
- Leaders must know and follow all of the leadership requirements of the Club Unit that sponsors their Activity.
- Leaders must make a reasonable, good faith effort to secure all permits and adhere to all laws and regulations.
- Leaders must remain in good standing.
- Leaders must provide their sponsoring Club Unit with their name, address, phone number, membership number, expiration date and email (if available).

Participants and Activity Management

- Leaders may not exclude persons from an Activity on the basis of race, religion, color, national and ethnic origin, gender, sexual preference, marital status, age (except minors), or physical disability that can be reasonably accommodated on the proposed Activity. Accommodations for participants with disabilities may be made to the level that they do not increase risk to the group. See *Guidelines for Leaders* for information on screening participants. See <http://www.outdoors.org/volunteers/forms/youth-participation-information.cfm> for additional information on minor participants on standard volunteer led outings.
- When a participant is subject to leadership by an approved AMC Leader acting as an AMC Leader, the participant shall be required to sign an approved AMC release.
- Notify all participants that there is an element of risk in the Activity through the use of one of the following release documents in their approved formats:
 - 1) Acknowledgement of Risks, Assumption of Risks, and Release Agreement for AMC Volunteer-Led Activities
 - 2) AMC Volunteer-Led Major Excursions Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks & Release and Indemnity Agreement
 - 3) AMC Volunteer Managed Facilities Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks & Release and Indemnity Agreement
- Keep track of the number of participants in the group and account for all participants at the conclusion of the Activity.
- When co- sponsoring an activity with an outside organization, it is the responsibility of the Leader to identify the responsibilities and services provided by each organization (emergency response, participant screening, etc.). Participants should be made aware of the nature of the co-sponsored arrangement and the specific responsibilities as well (this information should be included in the trip listing or a pre-trip briefing).
- If, in the course of any Activity, an accident or incident occurs that meets any of the following criteria, the Leader must file a report of the incident as soon as possible with the sponsoring Club Unit and with the Leadership and Risk Management Department. Accidents and incidents requiring reporting are as follows:
 - 1) Incident response involves the use of outside agencies (police, hospital, emergency response, search and rescue, etc.)
 - 2) Participant involved in incident receives professional medical care (to the knowledge of the Leader), is recommended professional medical care by the Leader, or refuses the offer or recommendation of professional medical care

In addition, a Leader may file an incident report under other circumstances at his or her discretion. A Leader should consider the emotional and physical welfare of any participants involved in the incident, their attitudes towards the incident, and any potential for future complaints or lawsuits.

3) In cases involving potentially life threatening or disabling injuries or in the case of a fatality, the Leadership and Risk Management Department or other staff at AMC headquarters (800-217-7975) should be contacted as soon as the situation reasonably permits. For more information on contacting AMC staff in the event of an emergency, please refer to the crisis communication chart at

http://www.outdoors.org/pdf/upload/crisis_communication_chart.pdf

Equipment

- Leaders must check that all participants are equipped with Activity-appropriate safety equipment and that it is used at all appropriate times.
 - 1) On all outdoor rock climbing, ice climbing, bicycling and in-line skating activities, helmets appropriate to the Activity must be worn during participation by all Leaders and participants.
 - 2) A paddling Activity Leader may require helmets on any Activity. Helmets must be worn by Leaders and participants while open boating on Class III or higher rapids, while closed boating on Class II or higher rapids, and while rafting in all rapids.
 - 3) Personal floatation devices (PFDs) must be worn at all times when paddling Activity Leaders or participants are on the water with the exception of flat water boating Activities. On flat water boating Activities, PFDs must be present for all Leaders and participants in their boats at all times.
- Leaders must refuse participation to individuals not equipped with the safety equipment listed above or any other equipment deemed necessary for the safe participation in the Activity by either the Leader or the sponsoring Club Unit.
- Leaders must make reasonable efforts to ensure that appropriate safety and first aid equipment is available during their Activity.

Accident Scene Management

In case of accident or injury, the leader or his or her designee should decide on an appropriate course of action to manage the accident scene.

Guidelines for Leaders

These guidelines are further standards that should be met by all Leaders. There are some instances in which it may not be possible or in the best interest of Activity participants for a Leader to meet these standards because of the nature of the Activity or situations arising while the Activity is in progress. Excluding those instances, Leaders should meet these guidelines at all times in order to maintain high standards of quality Activity leadership.

Consider the safety of the participants to be more important than the goal or the completion of the Activity and always be prepared to cancel the Activity, change plans or turn back upon the recognition of unreasonable or unacceptable risks.

Training and Preparedness

- In addition to any training required by sponsoring Club Units, Leaders are encouraged to attend AMC or other outdoor leadership training and associated courses, such as skill enhancement, appropriate first aid, lifesaving, and CPR.
- Leaders should have a technical skill level that comfortably exceeds that required for the difficulty of the Activity that they are leading.
- If Leaders are unfamiliar with the area in which their Activity will take place, they should familiarize themselves in advance of the Activity (e.g. by studying trail guides, river guides or maps, talking with others, or scouting the area).

Communication

- In describing an Activity and its relative difficulty, writing an Activity announcement, providing information to participants subsequent to the announcement, describing the meeting place and time, and detailing cancellation procedures, Leaders should strive to be accurate, complete, concise, and clear.
- Leaders should communicate the Activity plan, guidelines, and safety procedures to the participants before the Activity begins and keep participants informed of any changes in plan. Leaders will expect and encourage participants to inform the Leader of any changes in their ability or willingness to continue with the Activity.

Participants and Group Management

- Applicants/participants may be excluded due to inadequate qualifications or experience, insufficient skill, inadequate equipment, capacity limitations, previously demonstrated personal incompatibility, unsafe actions, refusal to share community work, or inappropriate behavior. Minors (under age 18) may be excluded for any of the above reasons and must be accompanied by a responsible adult. See *Requirements for Leaders* for the AMC's non-discrimination policy.

Screening participants can be a challenging and complex undertaking. If you have difficulties or questions regarding this issue, or an individual participant, feel free to contact the chair of your sponsoring Activity committee, your chapter chair or regional director, or the Leadership and Risk Management Department (603-278-3821).

- During the Activity, Leaders should attempt to facilitate positive group interactions and to make sure that new people are introduced and integrated into the group.
- Leaders should expect and encourage participant conduct consistent with Leave No Trace environmental and conservation principles and local regulations.
- Leaders should not require anyone to attempt any element of the Activity that is beyond his or her ability.
- Leaders should discourage anyone from ridiculing or otherwise embarrassing another person who chooses not to attempt any element of the Activity that they feel is unsafe, dangerous, hazardous, or beyond their current abilities.

Activity Management

- If the Leader is unable to participate, a qualified replacement Leader should be found according to the policy of the sponsoring Club Unit. If a qualified replacement Leader cannot be found, the Activity must be canceled and participants notified.
- Leaders should carry appropriate information resources, such as guidebooks, maps, etc. as applicable in the event that the Activity plan must be modified.
- Leaders should designate sufficient assistant leaders, for duties such as lead, sweep, sub-group leader, or others, to make reasonable efforts to minimize participant risk.
- Leaders should designate only persons as assistant leaders who have the skills required for the tasks assigned.
- Leaders should set and maintain a pace appropriate for the group and consistent with the description of the Activity. Slow the pace if the current pace is compromising group management. In the interest of safety, try to keep the group together.
- There may be times when it is advisable to divide large groups into smaller, independent sub-groups. Factors that should be considered include: regulations or suggestions regarding group size; type of Activity and size of group that the Leader team can manage safely and effectively; impact on the environment; and impact on other persons' outdoor experience. If the Leader divides the group into sub-groups, the Leader should assign qualified assistant Leaders. With respect to bicycle trips on public roadways or other common ways, due to participants' varying levels of expertise and ability and their personal riding preferences, sub-groups form and dissolve during the course of the trip. So long as these groups remain between the point Leader and the sweep Leader, no qualified assistant Leaders need be assigned to each sub-group.

Requirements for Activities

The following requirements must be met in order for an Activity to be considered an official Activity of the Appalachian Mountain Club and ensure coverage under AMC's general liability insurance policy.

- Activities sponsored and conducted by any unit of the Appalachian Mountain Club shall be in support of and consistent with the traditions, principles, and mission of the Club.
- Activities must be approved by persons designated for that purpose by the sponsoring Club Unit.
- An approved Activity must be **announced or publicized** to the membership through an official AMC channel of announcement and/or publication (except under the two circumstances described below). The following methods are suitable:
 - 1) **AMC Outdoors** – The club's member magazine is used for Activity announcements through its established approval processes.
 - 2) **trips.outdoors.org** – The Club's online trip listing database is used through its established approval processes.
 - 3) **Sponsoring Club Unit Publications** – Schedules, newsletters, etc. are also a common method of announcement and current rules for listing set by each publication apply.
 - 4) **Postings** – Camps and Club facilities generally post a list at the beginning of each week, or other time period, of their approved Activities scheduled for that period.
 - 5) **Phone Line/Voice Mail** – A telephone answering machine, voice mail service or "hotline" maintained by the sponsoring Club Unit may be used to verbally announce information regarding approved Activities.
 - 6) **Electronic Media** – Electronic announcements (such as web site listings, internet Groups or e-mail listservs) are acceptable as long as they are presented through a system maintained by the sponsoring Club Unit provided that the Activities are approved by a moderator authorized to represent the sponsoring Club Unit and the Activity meets all relevant requirements. The posting of Activities by individuals to read and write public accessible newsgroups or bulletin board systems or the sending of messages to an e-mail list by persons not appointed to do so by a Club Unit are not acceptable methods of announcement and do not constitute approval of the Activities as AMC Activities.
- Certain Activities are intended to serve a limited group of AMC members (e.g. a hike for urban youths or a canoe Activity for persons with disabilities requiring physical accommodations). These types of Activities may not be suitable for publication to the full membership or the public but are publicized in more targeted ways. These Activities must receive prior written approval from the sponsoring Club Unit.
- Certain Activities are approved by sponsoring Club Units but cannot be advertised by any of the approved methods above because of time restraints (e.g. a paddling Activity dependent on the current water level or a trail maintenance day to clear blow down immediately following a major storm). Sponsoring club unit must keep a log of all activities that they are not able to announce or publish by the approved methods. The information in this log should include the dates of the request and approval, the date of the Activity, the Leader, the kind and general location of the Activity.



AMC encourages involvement in its mission and activities for members and non-members. Our goal is to be a community that is comfortable, inviting, and accessible for people of any age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

Although some AMC activities are designed to appeal to a particular audience based on age, skill level, or interest, AMC activities are open to all who meet the minimum qualifications established by the trip leader(s) and the organization's [Essential Eligibility Criteria](#). For activities that require additional skills, leaders often conduct an initial conversation with potential participants to go over what to expect in terms of difficulty, any required gear, or logistics. This step helps ensure that participants sign up for trips that match their goals, comfort, and skill level. Applicants may be excluded due to previously demonstrated personal incompatibility, unsafe actions, refusal to share community work, or inappropriate behavior.

The activities offered by AMC involve varying degrees of risk. You should be both physically and mentally prepared and equipped with the appropriate gear. You should always be aware of the risks involved in outdoor activities and conduct yourself accordingly. The trip leader is not responsible for your safety; you are. Prior to registering for any activity, you are encouraged to discuss your capabilities with the trip leader. In order to participate in club activities, individuals under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult, and obtain prior consent from the trip leader. Those accompanying a minor are responsible for that minor's actions.

To participate in many activities and use many of the facilities listed in this section, a signed liability release is required. The appropriate trip leader or facility registrar can provide info on what is required for specific activities or facilities. Minor participants, regardless of who they are accompanied by while participating in AMC activities must have a parent or legal guardian sign [AMC's liability release agreement](#) prior to the activity.

Except for meeting place and time, a leader may change an activity as conditions warrant. Leaders are not responsible for placing cars at an activity's end point unless it is so stated in the listing. Check current train/bus schedules where applicable. Pets may not accompany owners on AMC activities without permission from the leader.

AMC VOLUNTEER LED ACTIVITIES

ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISKS & RELEASE AGREEMENT

Date:

Leader:

Chapter:

Activity:

PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT (hereafter 'Document') **CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING**. All participants must sign this Document. For participants under 18 yrs. of age (hereafter sometimes 'minor' or 'child'), parent/s or legal guardian/s (hereafter collectively 'parent/s') must also sign. In consideration of the services of the Appalachian Mountain Club, Inc., a charitable, not-for-profit corporation, organized and existing under the laws of Massachusetts, and its chapters, including all officers, directors, employees, representatives, agents, independent contractors, volunteers (including leaders and co-leaders), members and all other persons or entities associated with it (collectively referred to in this Document as 'AMC'), I (participant and parent/s of a minor participant) acknowledge and agree as follows:

AMC volunteer-led educational and/or adventure activities may include, but are not limited to hiking, backpacking, camping, biking, skiing, maintenance of trails and facilities, mountaineering, rock and ice climbing, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, use of AMC huts or other facilities and transportation or travel to and from activities (referred to in this Document as 'activities' or 'these activities'). **The leaders of these activities are volunteers. They are not paid professional guides or leaders.** In all activities, all participants share in the responsibility for their own safety and the safety of the group. Participants (and parents of minors) take responsibility for having appropriate skills, physical conditioning, equipment and supplies for these activities.

These activities include inherent and other risks, hazards and dangers (referred to in this Document as 'risks') that can cause or lead to injury, property damage, illness, mental or emotional trauma, paralysis, disability or death to participant or others. Some, but not all of these risks include: hazardous and unpredictable ground, water or weather conditions; misjudgments made by leaders, co-leaders, participants or others; travel in remote areas that can cause potential delays or difficulties with transportation, evacuation and medical care; equipment that can fail or malfunction; the potential that the participant or others (e.g. co-participant, driver, medical and rescue personnel) may act carelessly or recklessly. I understand that AMC cannot assure participant's safety or eliminate any of these risks. **Participant is voluntarily participating with knowledge of the risks. Therefore, participant (and parent/s of minors) assume and accept full responsibility for the inherent and other risks (both known and unknown) of these activities, and for any injury, damage, death or other loss suffered by participant, resulting from those risks, and/or resulting from participant's negligence or other misconduct.**

I (adult participant, and/or Parent/s for themselves and for and on behalf of their participating minor child) agree to release and not to sue AMC (as AMC is defined above) in regard to any and all claims, liabilities, suits, or expenses (including reasonable costs and attorneys' fees) (hereafter collectively 'claim' or 'claim/s'), including claim/s resulting from AMC's negligence (but not its gross negligence or intentional or reckless misconduct), for any injury, damage, death or other loss to me or my child, in any way connected with my or my child's enrollment or participation in these activities, or my use of AMC equipment, facilities or premises. I understand I agree here to waive all claim/s I or my child may have against AMC, and agree that neither I, my child, or anyone acting on my or my child's behalf, will make a claim against AMC.

I (participant and parent/s of a minor participant) agree that the substantive laws of Massachusetts govern this Document and all other aspects of my relationship with AMC, and that any mediation, suit, or other proceeding must be filed or entered into only in Massachusetts. **This Document is intended to be interpreted and enforced to the fullest extent allowed by law. Any portion of this Document deemed unlawful or unenforceable shall not affect the remaining provisions, and those remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.**

PARTICIPANT AND PARENT/S OF A MINOR PARTICIPANT AGREE: I HAVE CAREFULLY READ, UNDERSTAND AND VOLUNTARILY SIGN THIS DOCUMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGE THAT IT SHALL BE EFFECTIVE AND BINDING UPON ME, MY MINOR CHILDREN AND OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS, AND MY HEIRS, EXECUTORS, REPRESENTATIVES AND ESTATE. Parent/s must sign below, both in their capacity as a participant, and as Parent/s of any minor child identified below.

Frequently Asked Questions About the AMC Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk & Release Agreement (aka Volunteer Release Agreement)

1. What does the Volunteer Release Agreement say?

Here are the main parts of the Volunteer Release Agreement in plain English:

- Participants must share responsibility for their own safety and the safety of the group.
- Participants acknowledge that the activity of the trip has inherent risks that cannot be eliminated. Risks include injury, property damage, illness, mental or emotional trauma, paralysis, disability or death.
- Participants agree to release and not sue the AMC (which includes its volunteer leaders) for damages resulting from negligence on the part of the AMC (including on the part of a volunteer leader).
- Participants agree that if they do file a suit against the AMC, they will do so in the state of Massachusetts.

In addition to the above aspects of the VRA, there are other important sections and details in the document. Volunteer trip leader represent the AMC, and it is their responsibility to be familiar with the language in the VRA. Trip leaders should read the VRA in full and remind themselves of its contents periodically.

2. Do trip leaders have to have participants sign the Volunteer Release Agreement?

Yes. To not have participants sign the Volunteer Release Agreement is to deviate from the Leadership Requirements and Guidelines. If a leader were to allow a participant to join an AMC activity without signing the VRA, that leader would be exposing him/herself and the AMC to a variety of possible claims should some harm occur to the participant in the activity. That leader would not be protected from liability in most of the ways outlined in the FAQ document on Liability Protection and Insurance for AMC Volunteer Trip Leaders.

3. What happens if a trip participant refuses to sign the Volunteer Release Agreement?

If a person refuses to sign the Volunteer Release Agreement, he/she may not participate on the trip. There is no gray area – a signed VRA is required for participation.

4. Do people who participate in activities frequently have to sign the Volunteer Release Agreement each time they go on an outing?

Yes. The Volunteer Release Agreement specifies an activity, leader(s), and date(s). Because this will be different for each activity someone participates in, they must sign the VRA each time. This also provides you with the name and emergency contact for each individual – information that could be valuable in an incident.

5. Should minors sign the Volunteer Release Agreement?

If a minor is old enough to sign his or her name, he/she should certainly do so. Even if the law may treat minors differently in the event of legal action, minors should still be made aware of the risks involved in an activity and be asked to acknowledge them. If a minor is too young to read and sign the form, a parent or legal guardian should write the minor's name, provide emergency contact information, and sign and date the Volunteer Release Agreement.

Whether or not a minor is able to acknowledge risk and/or sign the VRA, a legal guardian **must** also sign and date the document. As a reminder, AMC policy requires that individuals under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult, who is also responsible for the minor's actions.

6. How often should I submit the signed Volunteer Release Agreements?

Forms can be submitted as often as it is convenient for you but we ask that you wait no more than six months before sending the forms to the AMC Boston office.

Instructions for how/where to send them can be found at the bottom of the form. If submitting the document via email, please make sure that the resolution is of high enough quality to be legible, and include this information in the subject line of your email: *Chapter, Trip Date, Leader Name*.

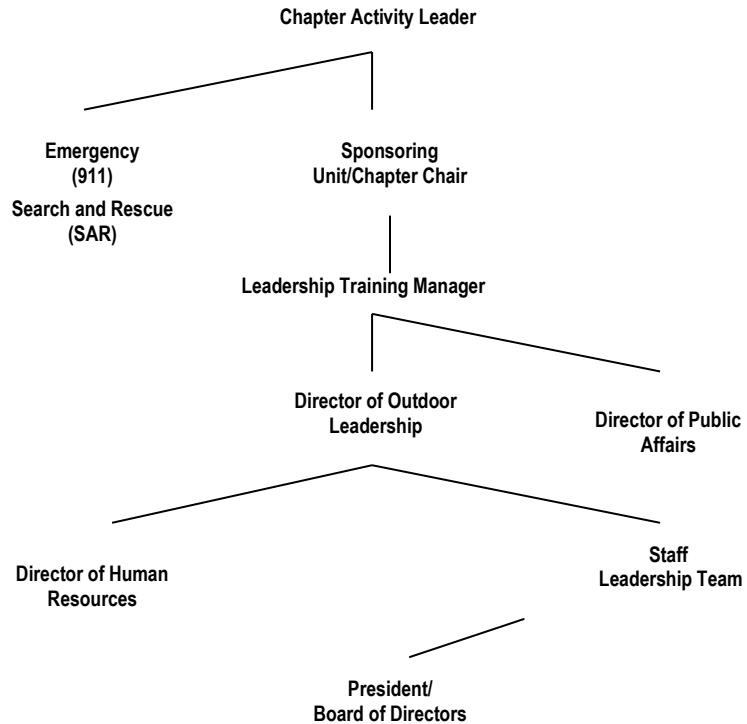
7. What is done with signed Volunteer Release Agreements after they are received in the Boston office?

Signed VRAs are legal documents that may be useful in the event of legal action. Because of the potential for legal action to be taken years after an incident, signed VRAs are stored for seven or more years in the Boston office.

8. Do leaders need to sign the volunteer release agreement & how often?

It is best practice for leaders to sign the volunteer release agreement each time they lead an activity. In the event of the leader becoming injured during the activity, other members of the group will have access to their emergency contact information via the volunteer release agreement.

AMC CHAPTER CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS CHART



Chapter Chairs and Sponsoring Unit Chairs are responsible for providing the correct current phone numbers for the following list.

Please note: Numbers listed under "Other" are confidential and strictly for emergency use only.

Specific Chapter Contacts (additional spaces for new or other important contacts)

Title	Name	Emergency Phone	Office Phone	Other
Sponsoring Unit Chair				
Chapter Chair				
Local Emergency Contact	911 (please note SAR may be activated using another number depending on location)			
Director of Outdoor Leadership	Aaron Gorban	(800) 217-7975	603-466-8054	603-662-5651 Cell Phone
Leadership Training Manager	Colby Meehan	(800) 217-7975	603-278-3821	248-792-1157 Cell Phone

Patient Care Form - Treatment Plan

Plan: Treatment Plan for every problem on Assessment List:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

Monitor: How and how often do you plan to monitor this patient? Any changes needed to treatment?

Sign Off: Anyone 18 and older can refuse care.

I decline further medical care by the AMC and/or transportation to a local hospital.

Patient Name (printed): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Date: _____

Patient Care Form

Patient Information

Patient Name: _____
Date of Birth: _____ Age: _____ Sex: M / F
Address: _____
Phone #: _____
Emergency Contact Name: _____
Emergency Contact Phone #: _____

Course Name: _____ Date of Injury: _____
Care-Giver: _____ Location: _____

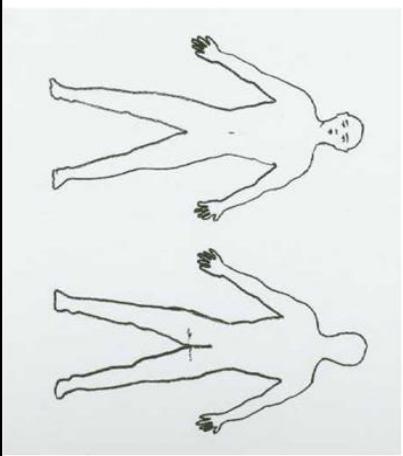
Chief Complaint and Mechanism of Injury

(Pain Questions: onset, palliates/provokes, quality, radiating, severity (1-10), and trend)

Primary Survey Problems	
Airway	_____
Breathing	_____
Circulation	_____
Central Nervous System	_____
Deformity	_____
Environmental	_____

Patient Care Form - Secondary Survey

Physical Exam: Describe locations of pain, tenderness, and injuries:



Patient Care Form - Secondary Survey and Assessment

Vitals (every 5 minutes for critical, every 15 for non-critical)

Time				
LOC oriented x?				
Resp. R & effort				
Heart R & effort				
Skin Color, Temp, Moisture				
BP				
Pupils				

Assessment: Problem List or Field Diagnosis

1)

2)

3)

4)

Patient History	
Signs, Symptoms	_____
Allergies	_____
Medications	_____
Past/Previous	_____
Last food/drink & urination/defecation	_____
Events	_____

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB Facility
 Chapter**Volunteer Accident/Incident Report Form**Subject Name: _____ D.O.B. _____ Male/Female (*circle one*)

Subject Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Activity/Facility: _____

Date/Time of Incident _____ Location of Incident: _____

Trip Leader: _____

WEATHER

Temp:(F) _____ Precip: _____ Wind:(mph) _____ Visibility: _____

TYPE OF INCIDENT

(Check One)

-
- Injury
-
-
- Illness
-
-
- Other

Outcomes of Incident:

1. Did subject leave activity, facility or event? Yes/no Date: _____
2. Was outside assistance used? Yes/No Date: _____
3. Did subject go to a medical facility? Yes/No Date: _____
4. Did subject return to activity or facility? Yes/ No Date: _____

LOCATION OF INJURY _____

- Head Eyes Face Mouth Neck Shoulder
 Chest Upper Back Lower Back Abdomen
 Pelvic Area/Hips Genitalia Upper Arm Elbow
 Lower Arm Wrist Hand Finger Buttock
 Upper Leg Lower Leg Knee Ankle Foot Toe

Circle One, Patient's : Right / Left / Midline of Body

RESPONSE _____

Were bodily fluids spilled? YES / NO

If yes, were universal precautions followed? YES / NO

(See below)

ACTIVITY AT TIME OF INCIDENT

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sailing | <input type="checkbox"/> Road Biking | <input type="checkbox"/> Downhill Skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Whitewater Kayaking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking | <input type="checkbox"/> Ice Climbing | <input type="checkbox"/> Group Initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> Whitewater Canoeing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camping | <input type="checkbox"/> Backpacking | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter Camping | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter Mountaineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day Hike | <input type="checkbox"/> Snowshoeing | <input type="checkbox"/> Mountain Biking | <input type="checkbox"/> Technical Rock Climbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Work | <input type="checkbox"/> Sea Kayaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Backcountry Skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Event (dinner, movie etc) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> X/C Skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicle Travel | <input type="checkbox"/> Flatwater Canoeing | |

 Other: _____**Universal Precautions •re Blood and Bodily Fluids**

- Use impermeable gloves if blood or body fluids containing visible blood are anticipated.
- Stop the bleeding, cover the wound and change the uniform if contaminated with excessive amounts of blood.
- Wash hands and skin after contact with blood.
- Clean any surfaces or equipment with appropriate disinfectant and clean clothes or skin with soap and water or an appropriate antiseptic.
- Use proper disposal procedures for contaminated clothing and equipment.
- Use a ventilation device for emergency resuscitation.
- Avoid direct contact with patient if you have an open skin condition.
- Follow accepted guidelines for control of bleeding and for any body fluids containing visible blood.
- Encourage all participants to use individual water bottles.

~ **CONTINUED ON REVERSE** ~

Appalachian Mountain Club Volunteer Accident/Incident Report Form

Subject Name: _____

Narrative: In the following space please provide a brief, factual account of this accident.

Describe any and all symptoms of injury and/or illness that subject exhibited

Describe your response to the accident and/or your treatment of the patient.

Attach any patient care forms, **Search and Rescue** (SAR) forms, and/or photos.

REPORT PREPARED BY: _____ **POSITION:** _____

Witnesses:

Outside Agencies Involved: _____

Signature: _____ **Date Report written:** _____

TRIP PARTICIPANTS

Narrative: Provide an account of your involvement in this accident.

(Additional participants who can provide additional information should attach their narrative on a separate piece of paper)

Participants Signature: _____ Date: _____

When completed, send copy to:

Aaron Gorban

Director of Outdoor Leadership Training

AMC Pinkham Notch

P.O. Box 298

Gorham, NH 03581

Provide Additional Copy to:

Sponsoring Committee Chair _____ Chapter Chair _____ and/or Facility Safety Committee _____

AMC Policies - Approved by the Board of Directors on February 2, 1997

Code of Conduct

All AMC members and staff will conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the Club's mission and in a way which is not detrimental to the Club, its members, the public or staff, and which will provide the highest level of enjoyment in the activities and other events sponsored by the Club. With this in mind, individuals will:

Conduct activities in the safest manner possibly.

Ensure quiet enjoyment by others

Remain free from conflicts of interest, and

Abide by the rules and policies established by the Club and its Chapters, Camps and activity and other committees.

Sexual Harassment Policy

The AMC does not condone nor will it tolerate sexual harassment by any member or staff. Sexual harassment may be physical or verbal and may be between the same sex or opposite sex. Those who feel that a case of sexual harassment has taken place should report the matter to their committee chair in the case of volunteers or the President in the case of a member of the Board. Incidents will be thoroughly investigated and a determination made if there is a case of sexual harassment. The investigation should be conducted in a manner to ensure the privacy of those involved. If an incident of sexual harassment is determined to have occurred, appropriate disciplinary action may be taken up to and including removal as a member, and a Board member may be asked to resign. Individuals with questions regarding sexual harassment issues may contact either the Chapters Relations Director or Human Resources Manager for assistance.

Conflict of Interest Policy

In general, a person has a conflict of interest if he or she, or a member of their families or an organization in which he or she has an interest, has an existing or potential financial or other interests which may impair or reasonably appear to impair a member's independent, unbiased judgment in activities conducted for the Club, or which may be seen as providing a financial or other benefit. In these cases, members should disclose, in writing, to the committee chair such potential conflict of interest, and should refrain from such activity until the committee chair, in consultation with others as needed, has determined that the potential conflict will not have an adverse effect on the club and its members. Board members will be guided by the Bylaws while staff will be guided by the Personnel Policy and Procedures manual.

Diversity

The AMC encourages the involvement of all people in its mission and activities, through its membership, programs, policies, and procedures. Our goal is to be a community that is comfortable, inviting, and accessible for people of any age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

Prevention of and Reporting of Abuse and Neglect of Children

In the course of outdoor programs sponsored by the Appalachian Mountain Club, our staff and volunteer trip leaders could encounter situations where they have to take direct action in order to prevent or report the abuse or neglect of children. The following policies and procedures give AMC staff and volunteers guidance in handling such situations. The policies and procedures are based on the applicable General Laws of each state where we have programs and chapters, as well as existing AMC policies. Each case is unique and will require that we exercise good judgment and make adjustments as necessary. Staff should work with their supervisors; volunteers with their committee chairs to seek guidance and resolution – AMC's Human Resources Director can assist.

It is the policy of AMC that:

1. Each child entrusted to our care will be afforded every reasonable safeguard against abuse or neglect.
2. All AMC paid trip leaders for outdoor programs, as well as their supervisors, will be considered “mandated reporters.” They will comply with the intent and legislative requirements of local authorities:

Chapter 119, section 51A of the General Laws of Massachusetts.

RSA 169-C, New Hampshire Child Protection Act

Title 22, Chapter 1071 Maine State Law

All AMC volunteer trip leaders are not considered “mandated reporters” but are encouraged to report child abuse in the child’s home state, as any citizen is encouraged to do.

3. Each trip leader – volunteer or staff - will use the procedures listed below to:
 - Prevent child abuse
 - Evaluate suspected child abuse
 - Report cases of suspected child abuse
4. All AMC trip leaders will maintain confidentiality in handling information pertaining to allegations of child abuse or neglect. The use of names or other identifying information of both the child and the alleged abuser will be kept to a minimum.

A. Procedures for Preventing Child Abuse

The following procedure will be followed in order to safeguard children against abuse and neglect while in AMC's custody:

1. All candidates for AMC staff positions in programs for children under 18 will be thoroughly screened in the application process through personal interviews, reference checks, and a criminal background check through the finalist's home state criminal record check system, if possible (some states do not allow out-of-state agencies to request this information). Interview topics will include a discussion about AMC's commitment to providing a safe environment for children, and can include a question to the candidate about their experience working with children, i.e.: “Is there anything in your past experience working with children that became a problem or was inappropriate?” Interviewers will also review our background check process with the candidate. When checking references on finalists, hiring managers should ask the referrer about anything in the candidate's experience interacting with children that could be a cause for concern.
All hired staff must pass the screening process, successfully complete a staff orientation, and be given a copy of this policy.
2. All AMC staff members who will be working with children in day or overnight programs (this includes Teen Wilderness Adventures, A Mountain Classroom, Teen Trail Crew, AMC Workshops, AMC naturalists and any other AMC program providing experiences for children)

and all AMC volunteer trip leaders working with youth trips will be trained on the following during orientation:

- Specific guidelines for staff regarding their own contact with children, to include (but not limited to): guidelines for discipline, appropriate touching, appropriate verbal interactions, and suggested supervisory procedures with children.
- An overview of how to recognize signs of abuse/neglect.
- Instructions on which supervisory staff shall be consulted for help in determining if child abuse/neglect is suspected or may have occurred.
- Their responsibilities as mandated reporters (staff only)

Procedures for Evaluating and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

A. If child abuse or neglect is suspected as occurring during the course of an AMC program:

1. If an AMC trip leader becomes aware of a situation of possible abuse/neglect that may have occurred during the course of an AMC program, the trip leader shall report the situation - immediately or as soon as it is safe - to the appropriate AMC program manager following AMC's emergency action plan chain of reporting. For programs in the backcountry, as soon as safely possible, the incident should be reported without divulging any confidential information, via radio call or via a cellular phone if operable. The AMC trip leader should consider evacuating from the field all of the involved people as soon as safely possible. While any such actions are in progress, the leader must work towards the continued emotional and physical safety for all involved as evacuation/reporting takes place.
2. The trip leader or their supervisor/committee chair will immediately act to protect the child and separate the child from the person alleged to have caused such abuse, and will begin to gather information related to the suspected abuse or neglect. The information will include but not be limited to:
 - The nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect.
 - Name and address of the child
 - Child's age and gender
 - Name and address of parent/guardian or person responsible for the child's care.
3. If an AMC staff member or AMC volunteer is suspected of having committed the abuse/neglect, then he or she will be immediately suspended from working with children by the program manager or his/her designee until the fact-finding process is completed and a final determination is made. Re-instatement of staff will occur only after all allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the appropriate AMC managers and Director of Human Resources. Reinstatement of volunteers will occur only after allegations have been cleared to the satisfaction of the appropriate committee chairs and AMC Director of Human Resources.
4. The AMC program manager/committee chair will conduct the initial fact-gathering surrounding the allegations, and will consult with his/her immediate supervisor and the Director of Human Resources in order to evaluate the situation. Fact gathering may include:
 - Medical assessment of the child by a medical provider at an emergency room.
 - Confidential collection of information surrounding the incident with written statements in the child's own words. The AMC program manager/committee chair will speak directly with the child, all adults who witnessed the incident, and finally the involved staff member. If other children witnessed the incident, they may only be questioned with a chaperone, parent or guardian present.

5. Contact with the parent or guardian of the child involved will be established by the program manager/ committee chair preferably no later than the end of the day in which the incident is reported, regardless of the stage of the initial fact-gathering and assessment.
6. The program manager will document the allegation and consult with the Director of Human Resources, as well as Facilities Director, Director of Trails or Director of Education, to determine any further action.

If in the professional capacity of the AMC Program Manager, there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered any abuse while in the care of AMC, then following steps will be taken:

1. The incident will be reported to state child abuse reporting hotline in the state where the incident took place (see attached list). *Note: this is only the case for an incident that happens while the minor is attending an AMC program – to report a suspected incident that occurred prior to the minor’s arrival at AMC, see part B for home state reporting.*
2. The program manager shall give a verbal report to the AMC Facilities Director, Director of Trails or Director of Education, leaving out names of the child or family. The program manager will then follow procedures outlined in the AMC’s Emergency Notification Plan, keeping the incident as confidential as possible.

The program manager will document the incident and consult with the Director of Human Resources once again to be sure the entire process is followed.

Any subsequent action regarding any staff trip leader actions will be taken in accordance with the AMC’s policy on termination. The AMC considers each employment relationship to be an “at will” arrangement, which either the employee or the AMC is free to terminate at any time. AMC chapters have the authority to approve or remove trip leaders from their volunteer roles.

B. If child abuse or neglect is suspected of having occurred outside of AMC programs:

1. If an AMC trip leader is informed, or otherwise learns, that a child who is participating in an AMC program may be suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse/neglect outside of AMC, he/she will immediately or as soon as safely possible inform the appropriate program manager. If that person is not available, then the reporting trip leader will contact the AMC Facilities Director, the Director of Education/Director of Trails, their committee chair or the Director of Human Resources.
2. The AMC program manager or committee chair will conduct the initial fact-gathering surrounding the allegations, and will consult with his/her immediate supervisor, to evaluate the situation. Fact gathering will include:
 - If available, a medical assessment of the child by a medical professional.
 - Collection of information surrounding the incident, with written statements in the child’s own words. The AMC program manager will speak directly with the child and all adult witnesses. If other children are possible witnesses, they may only be questioned with a chaperone, parent or guardian present.
3. The program manager or committee chair will document the allegation and consult with the Facilities Director, the Director of Trails, Director of Education Programs, or Director of Human Resources to determine any further action.

If, in the professional capacity of the program manager, there is reasonable cause to believe that a child has suffered any abuse outside of the AMC environment, then following steps will be taken:

1. A report will be filed with the child's home state Child Abuse Reporting Hotline using the procedure outlined below.
2. The program manager will follow procedures outlined in the AMC Emergency Notification Plan, without identifying the child.
3. The AMC program manager, Program Director and Director of Human Resources will discuss if and how the parent(s) or guardian(s) will be notified that a report has been filed with appropriate authorities. The staff at the Child Abuse Reporting Hotline may recommend NOT informing parents. Currently, state law and regulations do not require AMC to notify the parents or guardians that a report has been filed.

Procedure for Reporting to the Local Authority for Child Welfare:

A. For incidents prior to the child's attendance at an AMC program:

1. If after following the above procedures, the program manager or committee chair determines that there is reasonable cause to believe that a child who is participating in an AMC program has suffered any abuse/neglect before arriving, the program manager will file a report with the appropriate authority within the child's home state or province on the same day that this determination is made.
2. The trip leader, in the presence of the AMC program manager or committee chair, should confidentially call the child's home state or province Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Hotline as listed on the attached chart. If the suspected abuse or neglect occurred outside of an AMC program, one of the major concerns will be the safety of the child when returning home. Submit a written report if instructed by the counselor on the hotline.

B. If the alleged abuse occurred while the child was under the care of AMC:

1. The trip leader should contact the local authority for reporting child abuse for the state where the incident took place. (See attached list).
2. The program manager must also notify the local Board of Health that a report alleging that an incident of abuse or neglect of a child during a program has been filed. No written reports need to be forwarded on to the Board of Health.

After either step above, the AMC program manager or committee chair should document and follow all instructions given by the Hotline staff.

D E F I N I T I O N S – similar in most states

According to Chapter 119, section 51A of the General Laws of Massachusetts, (where AMC is headquartered) reporting child abuse or neglect is mandatory when:

"[in your professional capacity, you] have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare including sexual abuse, or from neglect, including malnutrition."

Abuse is any action that creates a substantial injury or a risk of injury to a child. Abuse can be physical, sexual or emotional. Physical abuse happens when a child is hurt through beating, shaking, kicking, burning or other types of bodily harm. A child can end up suffering from bruises, fractured or broken bones, internal injuries or even death. When children are denied the basic necessities they need to thrive, it is also considered physical abuse as well. Infants born addicted to drugs are physically abused, too.

Sexual Abuse occurs when a child has any sexual contact with an adult. This can happen through intercourse, which is considered rape under most states' laws. It includes any oral, genital or anal penetration. Sexual exploitation and molestation are also considered abuse, defined as contacts or interactions with a child that are used to satisfy an adult's sexual needs and desires. This includes any verbally enticing language, photography or pornography use, as well as fondling, masturbating or exposure of sexual organs by the adult. Sex between an adult and child is never consensual.

Emotional Injury hurts a child's mental development. It occurs when attitudes or actions repeatedly happen in a family or group that negatively effect the way a child feels about him/herself. This can impair a youngster's behavior and ability to function. Emotional abuse happens in all kinds of ways. A lack of love and support can be devastating. This can take the form of emotional detachment or a severe lack of affection. Extremely harsh, critical treatment of a child can cause emotional injury, too. This can include severe punishment, verbal assaults that may include belittling or scapegoating and rejection.

Neglect happens when a child's basic needs are not provided for. Every child needs food, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and a chance to grow. When a caregiver withholds these things, a child is neglected. This may happen deliberately or through negligence, or an inability to parent. The environmental circumstances that some parents may face, such as disability, homelessness or inadequate financial resources, are not seen as sources of neglect.

Any of the above conditions if suspected by an adult are grounds to report to the child's home state or province agency for child protection. If in doubt about your suspicions, discuss with your program supervisor or committee chair in consultation with AMC's Human Resources dept.

Board of Directors Update to AMC's Inclusion Statement

In support of AMC's [Vision 2020](#), the Board of Directors has recently been putting significant emphasis on increasing the diversity of the Club's membership. Getting more people of all backgrounds outdoors is essential to the continued success of our work in the conservation, protection, and stewardship of the natural world.

In support of this goal, the Board of Directors has updated the club's "inclusion statement" to specifically state that all AMC programs and facilities are open to the general public, whether they're AMC members or not. The Board's intention is to make it as clear as possible that the AMC is an organization for everyone. This is statement with the additional text:

AMC encourages involvement in its mission and activities, through membership, programs, policies, and procedures. Our goal is to be a community that is comfortable, inviting, and accessible for people of any age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status.

In keeping with our core principles of inclusion, all AMC programs, activities and venues shall be open to the general public regardless of AMC membership status (unless otherwise prelimited in the AMC by-laws, such as the election of Club officers).

What does this mean for chapters?

We can undertake a review of policies and practices to make sure none of them either intentionally or unintentionally suggest that a person needs to be an AMC member in order to participate in one of our programs or stay at an AMC destination. Volunteer Relations will work with chapters and committees to help them update language and to answer questions.

Additionally, Chapters have already taken steps to enhance AMC's culture of welcome by creating leader tools, improving communications pathways, and clarifying ways for people to engage through volunteering and fun social events. We will continue to work together on these items to help strengthen our chapters and the leader pipeline.

The Appalachian Mountain Club's Essential Eligibility Criteria

INTRODUCTION

The Appalachian Mountain Club promotes the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the mountains, forests, waters, and trails of the Appalachian region. We believe these resources have intrinsic worth and also provide recreational opportunities, spiritual renewal, and ecological and economic health for the region. Because successful conservation depends on active engagement with the outdoors, we encourage people to experience, learn about, and appreciate the natural world.

Participant safety and health are the top priority on all AMC activities. To minimize risk to a group participating in an AMC program, each individual must take responsibility for himself or herself, must participate within his or her own limits, and must contribute positively to the health and well-being of other participants and to the group as a whole.

The AMC values diversity – including persons with diverse abilities – in its programs. While we do not specialize in integrating persons with disabilities onto activities we sponsor, we encourage people of all abilities to consider participating in AMC activities. The AMC's Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC) is a list of the physical and cognitive requirements of activities sponsored by the AMC. The AMC's EEC are intended to be a resource for anyone considering participating in an AMC-sponsored activity, and are not intended to be exclusionary.

With approximately 8000 activities offered annually by the AMC, individual activity requirements can vary greatly. Activity descriptions may contain additional or more specific requirements. If you have concerns about your ability to meet certain criteria, please speak with the trip organizer to determine if reasonable accommodations can be made. If you have general questions about the AMC's EEC, or if you have concerns about the implementation of the EEC, please contact the Outdoor Leadership Department at leadership@outdoors.org.

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Assistance of Trained Aides

In some circumstances outlined in the EEC, participants may be eligible to participate on an AMC activity if they can meet an essential eligibility criterion with the assistance of a trained aide. Examples of trained aides include service animals, ASL translators, and individuals trained to assist a participant with physical, emotional, or communication requirements. In order for minors to meet the EEC, a parent, guardian or responsible adult who is known to the minor may act as an aide. If a participant requires a trained aide to meet any of the EEC, the participant or aide must notify the trip organizer beforehand, except in cases when an adult is accompanying a minor. The trained aide must meet the physical and cognitive requirements as outlined in the AMC's EEC.

Activities vs. Outings

The AMC uses the term 'activity' to describe any outing, trip, or event sponsored by the organization. One type of activity the AMC sponsors – outings – are defined as staying within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of a road or full-service facility **and** requiring no physical or technical abilities other than basic mobility indoors and outdoors. There are specific essential eligibility criteria that apply only to outings (section I). All other activities are subject to the general EEC for activities (section II). Some activities, such as backpacking, climbing, and

bicycling, have additional essential eligibility criteria (sections III – IX). Finally, individual activity and course descriptions may contain additional or more specific requirements.

Criteria with an Asterisk (*)

Throughout this document, an asterisk (*) is used to denote that individual activities may have a more challenging or more specific requirement than indicated in the criterion with the asterisk. Please refer to program materials or course descriptions or speak with the trip organizer if you have concerns or if you would like more detailed information.

I) ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR OUTINGS

All participants on AMC-sponsored outings must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 1.1 Effectively notify leaders or other participants of personal distress, injury, illness or the need for assistance.
- 1.2 Perceive, understand and follow instructions.
- 1.3 Perform necessary self-care, including maintaining adequate nutrition and hydration, dressing appropriately for environmental conditions, maintaining personal hygiene, and managing known medical conditions.
- 1.4 Work cooperatively as a member of a group and support a team approach, despite potentially challenging circumstances. This may require flexibility and the ability to compromise on an interpersonal or group level.

II) GENERAL ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ACTIVITIES

All participants in all AMC-sponsored activities must be able to complete the following requirements **without assistance**:

- 2.1 Effectively warn others of potential or impending hazards such as falling rocks, slippery terrain, snow or rock slide, aggressive animals or insects, fast water, falling person, or other environmental hazards.
- 2.2 Effectively notify leaders or other participants of personal distress, injury, illness or the need for assistance.
- 2.3 Complete the preceding warnings and notifications up to a distance of 50 meters and in conditions with limited visibility and audibility, such as darkness, inclement weather, loud background noise due to high winds or fast-moving water, or terrain where a line of sight to other group members or leaders is not available.
- 2.4 Remain alert and focused for several hours at a time while traveling through open water, wilderness and other remote terrain.

- 2.5 Perceive, understand and follow basic instructions, such as a direction to move, stand still, grasp something, or other action required to avoid a major threat. Such basic instructions may be delivered in a hazardous or stressful environment.
- 2.6 Travel during periods of inclement weather.

All participants in all AMC-sponsored activities must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 2.7 Perceive, understand and follow detailed instructions on wilderness travel, risk management, personal care, hazard avoidance, and other topics.
- 2.8 Recognize and react appropriately to significant and apparent hazards, including ones previously identified by leaders or other participants.
- 2.9 Learn and perform necessary non-verbal communication systems for a given activity, such as hand signals, rope tugs, body movements, etc.
- 2.10 Perform necessary self-care in a remote and outdoor environment, including maintaining adequate nutrition and hydration, dressing appropriately for environmental conditions, maintaining personal hygiene, and managing personal (and, in some cases, group) safety gear.
- 2.11 Work cooperatively as a member of a group and support a team approach, despite potentially challenging circumstances. This may require flexibility and the ability to compromise on an interpersonal or group level.
- 2.12 Act in a manner consistent with Leave No Trace ethics. Participants do not need to know Leave No Trace ethics prior to participating in an AMC activity, however all participants must be able to follow leaders' directions regarding minimum impact guidelines. For more information, go to www.lnt.org.
- 2.13 Manage any known medical conditions in a remote environment for as long as two times the scheduled length of the trip.

III) ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR WILDERNESS HIKING OR SNOWSHOEING ACTIVITIES

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on wilderness hiking and snowshoeing activities must be able to complete the following requirements **without assistance**:

- 3.1 Travel over uneven, variable terrain, including flat, uphill and downhill.*
- 3.2 If conditions become adverse, travel without stopping for breaks for one hour.

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on wilderness hiking and snowshoeing activities must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 3.3 Carry personal and group gear required for the specific activity in a backpack or lumbar pack.*

- 3.4 Carry the minimum pack weight for at least two hours beyond the intended duration of the activity.*

IV) ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ACTIVITIES WITH A CAMPING COMPONENT

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on camping activities must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 4.1 Learn and safely perform the fundamental camping skills of finding a campsite, setting up a shelter, and cooking with a camp stove.
- 4.2 Travel about the campsite in order to participate in instructional sessions, attend to toileting needs, and contribute to individual and group related tasks as necessary.

V) ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR FLAT WATER CANOE, FLAT WATER KAYAK, WHITEWATER, RIVER, OR LAKE ACTIVITIES

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on boating activities must be able to complete the following requirements **without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 5.1 Wear all required safety gear, such as approved personal flotation device, spray skirt, Neoprene gloves, approved helmet, etc.
- 5.2 Control a paddle and pull it through the water in order to steer and propel the boat forward.
- 5.3 Hold their breath while under water and, while in the water wearing a properly fitted lifejacket, be able to independently turn from a face down to a face up position keeping their head above water.

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on boating activities must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 5.4 Enter and exit a wet or dry watercraft.

VI) ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ROCK CLIMBING OR MOUNTAINEERING ACTIVITIES

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on rock climbing or mountaineering activities must be able to complete the following requirements **without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 6.1 Meet all of the unassisted Wilderness Hiking EEC (3.1 – 3.2).
- 6.2 Wear all required safety gear such as an approved harness, approved helmet, mountaineering boots, crampons ice axe/tool, etc.
- 6.3 Grip a rope firmly, grasp the rock face, and negotiate upwards on a climb.

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on climbing and mountaineering activities must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 6.4 Meet all of the assisted or unassisted Wilderness Hiking EEC (3.3 – 3.4).
- 6.5 Provide a reliable belay to another climber during roped climbs. To do so, a participant must be able to reliably manipulate a climbing rope through a belay device.

VII) ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR SKIING ACTIVITIES

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on skiing activities must be able to complete the following requirements **without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 7.1 Withstand below freezing temperatures for two hours beyond the intended duration of the activity.*

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on skiing activities must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 7.3 Move on skis over a variety of terrain conditions, including flat, uphill and downhill.*
- 7.4 After falling down while skiing, be able to get off the trail and get into position necessary to continue skiing.

VIII) ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ROAD AND MOUNTAIN BIKING ACTIVITIES

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on road and mountain biking activities must be able to complete the following requirements **without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 8.1 Pedal, steer, stop and negotiate a bike over a variety of terrain including flat, uphill and downhill.*
- 8.2 Wear all required safety gear, such as an approved helmet and reflectors.

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on road and mountain biking activities must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 8.3 Get on and off of a bicycle.

IX) ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR TRAIL WORK AND STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on trail work and stewardship activities must be able to complete the following requirements **without assistance** from a trained aide:

- 9.1 Meet all of the unassisted Wilderness Hiking EEC (3.1 – 3.2).

9.2 Wear all required safety gear such as an approved helmet, safety glasses, work gloves, boots, etc.

In addition to the EEC for all AMC-sponsored activities listed in section II, participants on trail work and stewardship activities must be able to complete the following requirements **with or without assistance** from a trained aide:

9.3 Meet all of the assisted or unassisted Wilderness Hiking EEC (3.3 – 3.4).

9.4 Perform manual labor tasks.

Activities Database Style Guide

Thanks to the amazing work and dedication of our volunteer leaders and staff, AMC introduces thousands of people to the outdoors and to the AMC experience. It is this capacity to connect people to their local environment that makes AMC special and it is through this connection that AMC hopes to foster a community that is actively engaged with the conservation and stewardship of our region's landscape and natural resources.

Included in this mission of connecting people to the outdoors is the goal of reaching a broader audience. We are proud of the Chapters' role in introducing and welcoming people outdoors and we want to continue to feature that important role through one of the most important access points for new and prospective members of the AMC: the Activities Database ([ActDB](#)).

Overview:

As an important first point of contact for many non and new members, our trip descriptions must be as clear and accessible to newcomers as possible. Over the years some habits have emerged where posts include shorthand or jargon that may discourage potential participants from signing up. This style guide will help you make the most of ActDB to promote your trips and keep the doors wide open for new and prospective members who want to get outdoors and/or volunteer. Together we can make our activity listings as inviting as possible!

Key aspects of a good activities listing:

- **Provides all important information:** answers the questions “what, where, when, and why”
 - What is the activity?
 - What do I need to participate? (any essential safety gear, for example)
 - Where will it take place? (Consider people viewing your listings from out-of-state.)
 - When will it be? (Include time of day.)
 - Why is this a great trip and why would somebody want to join in the fun?
- **Listing should be descriptive and fun:**
 - Use full sentences.
 - Describe the highlight of the activity or volunteer opportunity.
- **Easy to read:**
 - Break up the description into small paragraphs so it is easy on the eyes
- **Avoid using**
 - **AMC-specific jargon** (abbreviations, acronyms, codes, and any other terms that may confuse new and prospective members).
 - **Unwelcoming phrases**, such as “no stragglers” and “no dropping off the hike.” You can explain group ground rules either in screening or in your introductory talk at the start of the event.

For examples of great trip listings, see the last two pages of this guide.

Entering a Trip

Follow the steps below to make your trip listing as inviting as possible!

Title: Trip at a Glance

- Location, Destination, Goal
- Duration, Distance
- Level of Difficulty (Easy/Beginner, Moderate, etc.)
- Make it catchy and interesting if possible

Activity

- Select all activities that apply by holding down "Ctrl" and clicking on appropriate activities. This helps with participants' searching for your listing.
- Do not select more categories than apply.

Description

- Use full sentences and short paragraphs
- Describe the trip, e.g. **distance, elevation, terrain, conditions, scenery...**
- Explain the **level of difficulty** - what should they expect? Skills required?
- Say something about the **venue** (park, trail, area) that is interesting
- Provide an estimate of the **duration** of the activity, or return time
- Mention what is needed in terms of clothing, equipment, gear, food, and water; make it known if loaner gear/clothing is available
- Invite people to join. Make it interesting and fun!

Important Tools to Use in ActDB: Additional Info

- Links for more info - provide links to the park or other additional information that may be useful to participants
- **GPS location and map** - this is a very important tool that will increase the visibility of your trip on AMC's website. It also helps people instantly see how close they are to the event.

Photos and Other Additions

- On the new website, your photo will appear as the backdrop to your listing when someone clicks it. Scenic shots are ideal.
- **Leader bio and photo** - people like to see who they are going on a trip with. Depending on your comfort level, help them feel more at ease by saying something about yourself in "Bio 1" and adding a photo.

Examples of good activity listings:

Mt. Carrigain Photo Adventure

April 18, 2015 (Sat)

Hiking or Photography - it's all about the views! Here is an opportunity to combine the two and capture some stunning panoramic views from multiple viewpoints including a beautiful observation platform atop an old fire tower on the summit. The emphasis on this hike will be to stop and enjoy the woods and views to take photos, as well as discuss photography (although you don't have to be a photographer to come). On this early spring hike, we will ascend the summit via Signal Ridge Trail, which also offers beautiful vistas as it approaches the summit. Although the calendar will disagree, winter may still be alive and well in the mountains, so previous winter experience and full winter gear is required.

We will limit the group to 6 participants to facilitate photo opportunities and discussion. Although frequent stops will be taken to allow for ample photography, participants should be experienced hikers as the pace when we are moving will be moderate, and we will be covering 14 miles round-trip with an elevation gain of 4000 feet. Because our focus is on picture taking, be prepared for a longer than usual hiking time (10 hours, +/-). Join us on this excursion for good company, good conversation, and of course, wonderful views!

Register at <https://regi.amcboston.org/885>

Related Website(s):

<https://regi.amcboston.org/885>

Leader



Alex [REDACTED]
(best time to call: before 9pm)
[\(Email this contact person.\)](#)

Up in the mountains on almost a weekly basis, Alex leads outings in all seasons. While best known for fast-paced single day mega-hikes and gnarly back country bushwhacks in all seasons, he'll enjoy sharing his excitement for the mountains on almost any trip, with hikers at all

ability levels.

Co-Leader



Dan [REDACTED]

Co-Leader



Subbu [REDACTED]

Registration is required for this activity. See contact above.

Trip at a Glance

Activity: Hiking
Photography

Offered By: Boston

Status: Open

Location: Junction of Sawyer River Road and Rt 302, New Hampshire, White Mountains, NH



Backpacking Workshop-(Re)Ignite the Flame!

N

August 22, 2015 (Sat)

Do you want to backpack, but don't know how to get started? Did you backpack years ago before the kids came along? Come and enjoy a day of information and fun, either as an introduction or as a refresher. Either way, you are sure to glean information to get you started or to reignite your passion. Topics include fitness, footwear, backpacks (types, materials, packing, pack care, repair), clothing for all types of weather, shelters (tents, bivouac bags, sleeping bags/pads), the wilderness kitchen, comfort, safety, hygiene, terrain, wilderness hazards and trip planning. We will have sample gear for you to handle and discuss. Coffee, snacks and lunch will be provided. There is no charge for this workshop, but registration is required. Note: This workshop was rescheduled from 4/26/2015.

Trip at a Glance

Activity: Instruction (Skills)

Offered By: Delaware Valley (Pa.)

Status: Open

Location: Willow Grove, PA, Pennsylvania, Eastern, PA

Off-Peak Summit Backpack, Adirondack High Peaks, NY

August 09, 2015 - August 11, 2015 (Sun - Tue)

If you have never experienced hiking in the spectacular Adirondack High Peak Region or have wished to start climbing all 46 High Peaks, this is the backpack for you! This series will take place on Sundays through Tuesday, when the crowds are gone. Over the next few years, each excursion will include a few different peaks until all 46 have been summited. This debut trip will allow travelers time to get to the park and together we begin with a 6.5-mile hike. We will stop at Bushnell Falls, and continue to Slant Rock, where we will set up base camp and enjoy the creek and a leisurely dinner. Monday we will summit Marcy, Haystack and Basin, knocking off three incredible views of the Great Range, including the highest point in New York State. Hike out Tuesday and have a celebratory lunch on the way home. This trip will be an inspiring start to achieving a fun goal in a truly outstanding setting. Come explore this natural treasure in your backyard!

\$5.00 nonrefundable registration fee. Please preregister using the "Register Now" button below.

Also, please e-mail the leader after preregistering.

Trip at a Glance

Activity: Backpacking

Offered By: N.Y. - North Jersey

Status: Open

Location: United States, New York, Adirondacks, NY

Difficulty: Vigorous

Fee*: \$5 adult member

\$5 adult non-member

\$5 youth member

\$5 youth non-member

Register Now

7-Mile Hike in Prince William Forest Park

August 30, 2015 10:00AM - 1:00PM (Sun)

If you see this park from the air, you would see the largest green space in the Washington D.C. metropolitan area - 15,000 forested acres. But this piedmont forest ecosystem is more than just trees; within the forest are tiers of living space that support a variety of plants and animals. The forest floor, a nutrient-rich mat is home to tiny that hide in the rotting leaves and ferns. The park contains many wildflowers, evergreen shrubs like mountain laurel, and young trees. Watch for songbirds fitting among the branches.

This will be a moderate hike is a 7 mile loop with an elevation gain of 611 feet. The trail consists of packed dirt (with small to medium sized rocks that are easy to walk over, crushed rocks, or large roots) and some boulders that you step over, many rolling hills, 5 moderately steep short (1/10th mile) hills, many small wooden bridges, and wooden boardwalks.

There is a \$7 park entrance fee unless you have a NPS pass.

Related Website(s):

[Prince William Forest Park](#)

Leader



Kenneth Shuck

I have been a day hike leader for many years and enjoy exposing other hikers to new and interesting trails in local, state, and national parks.



Trip at a Glance

Activity: Hiking

Offered By: Washington DC

Status: Open

Location: 1870 Park Entrance Road, Triangle, VA 22172, Virginia, Northern, VA

Difficulty: Moderate

Entering a Volunteer Opportunity

Select “Event Type” – “Volunteer Opportunity”. Listings with this Event Type will appear on the “Get Involved” page of outdoors.org, making them easily searchable for people who are looking for ways to give back.

What is a volunteer opportunity?

‘Volunteer Opportunity’ covers any volunteer opportunity such as grilling at the leader picnic, becoming a leader trainer, tabling at events, or serving as a committee chair. We know that members, and particularly young members, are looking for ways to meet people through service. When listing a “Volunteer Opportunity” you will have all of the fields you have for a “chapter trip” plus a field where you can indicate the duration of the event: including half day, full day, weekend, extended, etc., under “additional info.”

Where do volunteer opportunities get highlighted?

‘Volunteer Opportunities’ will be pulled to the “Get Involved” as well as the “Volunteers” page of the newly redesigned outdoors.org. Some volunteer opportunities will also appear in *AMC Outdoors Magazine*.

How do I manage overlapping situations – is it a trip or a volunteer opportunity?

- **Paddling River Clean Up**– Post as a volunteer opportunity. The goal is not a paddling goal. Paddling is how the cleanup will happen, but the goal– the primary activity – is cleanup. Select ‘conservation’, ‘paddling’, and ‘volunteering’ under “activity”, and the event will also show up under those activities if searched.
- **Activities day with service project** – sometimes chapters have an event like a spring picnic where they offer a range of activities such as paddling, trail work, and cycling. This is probably best posted as a ‘chapter trip’ where the contributor selects the following from the activities list ‘paddling’, ‘cycling’, ‘volunteering’, and ‘trail work.’
- **Trail work & BBQ** – post as a ‘volunteer opportunity’ that includes the description of the BBQ and select ‘volunteering,’ ‘trail work’ and ‘social’ as part of the activities.

Entering a Volunteer Opportunity

Follow the steps below to help you create an inviting volunteer opportunity.

Title	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If relevant, indicate where the volunteer opportunity will occur.• Describe the volunteer opportunity in just a few words.• Highlight the purpose, fun, or goal of the volunteer opportunity. (clear brush, register people, edit our newsletter, etc.)
Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Select "volunteering" as well as other activities by holding down "Ctrl" and clicking on all relevant activities• Do not select more categories than apply.• See the previous page for advice on how to label overlap, such as a river clean-up, which is both paddling and a volunteer opportunity.
Description	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide details, and in a positive and motivating tone and let them know about required equipment, skills, time, etc.• State if there is training available.• Describe what will be accomplished with their time/help.• Use full sentences and short paragraphs.
ActDB Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Links - Provide other additional info that may be useful to potential volunteers such as Directions to the location, an equipment list, etc.• GPS location/map - this increases the visibility of your volunteer opportunity on outdoors.org.
Other Additions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the new website, your photo will appear as the backdrop to your listing when someone clicks it. Scenic shots are ideal.• Leader bio & photo - people like to see a photo. Depending on your comfort level, say something about yourself in "Bio 1" and add a photo.• Testimonials: ask other volunteers to write about their experience.• Duration: select the time commitment of the volunteer opportunity under "Additional Info."

Examples of good volunteer opportunity listings:

Climate Change, Energy, and the Outdoors: Event Volunteers

September 04, 2013 - November 13, 2013 (Wed - Wed)

Volunteer this summer and fall to help plan and host a series of films and other events focused on climate change, energy, and the outdoors. Help us create an informative and fun series! You can volunteer as much or as little of your time as you have.

We plan to offer at least one program each in Sept., Oct., and Nov. at AMC's Headquarters at 5 Joy Street, Boston, MA 02108 so that visitors can view an exhibit by photographer Barbara Bosworth. Bosworth's photographs of the New England National Scenic Trail will hang at AMC's headquarters September - November.

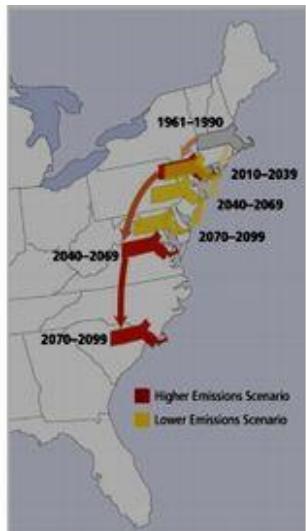
For this series of events AMC will collaborate with the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts (EDOM) who also plan to arrange events and programs focused on these themes. Our combined overarching goal is to raise awareness and inspire action on climate change among as many people as possible.

Related Website(s):

[AMC's Climate Change and Energy Work](#)

[100+ Boston Area Walks and Paddles](#)

[Barbara Bosworth Exhibit Announcement](#)



Source: NECCIA / UCB (see: www.climatchallenges.org/16)

Trip at a Glance

Activity: Conservation
Social Events
Volunteering
Cultural

Offered By: Boston

Status: Open

Location: AMC, 5 Joy Street,
Boston, MA 02108,
Massachusetts, Boston
Area, MA

Contact:

Faith Salter
617-391-6614

[\(Email this person.\)](#)

Registration is required for this activity. See contact above.

Driving Directions

AMC Headquarters Directions for MBTA and Parking:
<http://www.outdoors.org/about/facilities/facilities-boston-directions.cfm>
Nearest T stop is Park Street (Red Line and Green Line)
Parking Garages at Commons Parking and on Cambridge Street

Volunteer at a CSA-farm in Framingham

August 01, 2015 10:00AM - 2:00PM (Sat)

Come join AMC YM and BARPCV to support a CSA for the day at Stearns Farm in Framingham, MA!

What: Outdoor volunteering at a CSA farm
Where: Stearns Farm, 862 Edmands Road, Framingham
When: 10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Bring: Gloves (if you prefer them), water, LAYERS of clothing, hat, sunglasses, appropriate outerwear, and a bagged lunch (there is no trash or recycling on site, so please plan on carrying everything out with you)

RSVP Required- Please add your name below and indicate if you are interested in carpooling. Participants in need of transportation are encouraged to contact each other. Therefore please also include your location and contact information.
Questions? Contact event leader and AMC YM Volunteer Coordinator /BARPCV Community Service Chair Rachael White at rachael.white@barpcv.org /
[617-390-2201](tel:617-390-2201)

Trip at a Glance

Activity: Volunteering

Offered By: Boston

Status: Open

Location: Massachusetts, Boston
Area, MA

Register Now

Register Now

Berkshire Chapter Communications Volunteers

Until Filled

Do you have experience in the communications field, or are you interested in giving it a try? Whether you love writing, editing with a big red pen, or using social media, we have just the opportunity for you! We are assembling a communications team and are looking for volunteers to manage our newsletter, social media, and emails. We are also looking for a Communications Chair to manage the team.

The Communications Chair would be responsible for managing our communications team, which is responsible for the Berkshire Exchange (our triannual newsletter), monthly chapterwide emails, and keeping the content on our website up to date, as well as maintaining a Chapter Communications calendar.

If you have any questions about the position, please contact Secretary Roger Beer ([link to email below](#)). We look forward to working with you!

Contact

Trip at a Glance

Activity: Volunteering
-Leadership - Chapter
-Leadership - Committee

Offered By: Berkshire (Mass.)

Status: Open

Duration: Extended

Location: Massachusetts, Pioneer Valley, MA

Audience: 50+
Adults
Professionals
Young Adults

Bay Circuit Trail Saturday Work Party

November 07, 2015 (Sat)

Get out, give back, get dirty...and get to know the Bay Circuit Trail

Why volunteer?

Ever wonder what goes into maintaining a trail? Looking for a way to give something back to the local trails you already use? Perhaps you are looking for a way to enjoy the outdoors, learn new skills, and meet like-minded people? Interested in exploring natural "gems" of the greater Boston area? Our one-day trail events offer the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of trail maintenance or building from skilled AMC Trail Crew Leaders right in Boston's backyard.

2015 Bay Circuit Trail work parties will take place between April and November at various eastern-Massachusetts locations along the trail. Consider coming out for an event close to your home, or use this as a reason to get to know new natural places.

When & Where?

Saturdays and certain Sundays

- April 18 (Earth Week/National Volunteer Week) : Bridgewater
- May 16: Hamilton
- June 6 & 7 (National Trails Day, special times--2-day event): Ipswich
- July 25: Acton
- Sept 26 (National Public Lands Day): Medfield
- October 17: CANCELED
- November 7: Medfield

What should I expect?

A typical work party starts at 9am and runs until about 4pm. Participants bring their own lunch, water, snacks, long pants (no matter how hot it is!), sturdy hiking boots, and other clothing appropriate for the weather (projects run rain or shine!). The AMC Trail Crew Leaders will provide all personal protective equipment, trail tools, instruction and supervision.

On November 7, we will be cutting a new section of the Bay Circuit Trail to open a new route through the woods, moving the trail off of a nearby paved walk.

No experience is required to participate, but we encourage beginners and experienced trail volunteers alike. Programs are suitable for individuals, small groups and families with children 12 years and older.

Tell me more about the Bay Circuit Trail!

The Bay Circuit Trail (BCT) is a 230+ mile front country recreational resource that arcs around greater Boston from Newburyport on the North Shore to Kingston



Trip at a Glance

Activity: Conservation
Trail Work
Volunteering

Offered By: AMC Staff

Status: Open

Duration: Day

Location: MEDFIELD, MA,
Massachusetts, Boston Area, MA

Audience: 50+
Adults
Beginners
Experts
Families
First Timers
New Members
Professionals
Young Adults



Service Animals on AMC Volunteer-Led Activities Guidelines for Volunteer Trip Leaders

The participation of Service Animals in AMC events falls under the expectation that the Appalachian Mountain Club—including volunteer trip leaders—complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The following overview outlines ADA requirements regarding service animals, how these requirements apply to volunteer-led activities, which questions can and cannot be asked of the owner of a service animal, and which expectations may be set. These guidelines were established to minimize the risk of litigation to AMC and its volunteer leaders.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Overview: Under the ADA, organizations that are open to members of the public are prohibited from discriminating against individuals with disabilities. The ADA requires these organizations to allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals on activities it sponsors except in specific circumstances (see below). Volunteer trip leaders must comply with ADA requirements for the duration of their AMC activity, including any transportation that is an integral part of the activity, such as car-spotting.

What is a service animal? The ADA defines a service animal as any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. If they meet this definition, animals are considered service animals under the ADA regardless of whether they have been licensed or certified by a state or local government. Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that the individual with a disability cannot perform for himself or herself.

Some, but not all, service animals wear special collars and harnesses or are licensed or certified and have identification papers. However, such documentation may not be required as a condition for including an individual accompanied by a service animal on an AMC-sponsored activity. Although a number of states have programs to certify service animals, ***the AMC leader may not insist on proof of state certification before permitting the service animal to accompany the person with a disability on a club sponsored activity.***

Questions that AMC leaders may ask: In instances where the participant's disability is not apparent to the activity leader, the leader is permitted to ask ***only*** the following two questions regarding the animal:

- (1) Is the animal required because of a disability?
- (2) What work or task has the animal been trained to perform? ***The leader may not require that the service animal demonstrate the task(s) they are trained to perform.***

Setting expectations: Leaders may ask the service animal and its owner to abide by the following expectations:

- (1) That the service animal remains on-leash for the duration of the activity
- (2) That they abide by Leave No Trace principles for the duration of the activity

Leaders **may not** screen a service animal off of an AMC activity due to a suspicion that the animal is not a “real” service animal.

The leader may screen a participant with a service animal only if their participation would fundamentally alter the nature of the activity (for example, if the objective of the activity would not be achievable due to the physical ability of the animal) **or impact the safety of other participants.** Leaders are encouraged to use their judgment and screen participants for higher risk activities as well as share details with potential participants about the requirements to participate in a club-sponsored activity ([Essential Eligibility Criteria](#)).

Further questions regarding service animals or screening participants can be directed to AMC’s Director of Outdoor Leadership at leadership@outdoors.org.



Appalachian Mountain Club Volunteer-Led Activities Information regarding Youth Participation

As a part of AMC's Vision 2020, the club has identified an ambitious goal of providing outdoor experiences to 200,000 youth through direct service programming. To reach this goal, the organization recognizes volunteers will play a key role in providing close to home family activities offered through our chapters.

As a result of this initiative, volunteer Club Units of the AMC have requested clarification of Club-wide policies surrounding minors' involvement in the various volunteer run AMC outdoor programs. This document is intended to clarify minimum Club-wide requirements and guidelines. In addition, leaders should be aware of and comply with all local chapter and/or activity committee requirements pertaining to running any AMC outing.

Standard Chapter-Sponsored Volunteer Activities

Traditionally, the majority of activities offered by our chapters have been primarily geared toward adult participants. Approved leaders running trips on behalf of the AMC are encouraged to use their discretion to determine whether they feel allowing minors to attend the activity is appropriate. Leaders may opt to allow a minor to attend an activity in the absence of their legal guardian assuming that another responsible adult whom the child knows prior to the outing is willing to accompany and supervise the child participant while in the field. Any minor attending one of these outings (regardless of the presence of their parent or guardian) must have their parent or legal guardian sign AMC's Acknowledgement of Risks, Assumption of Risks, and Release Agreement for AMC Volunteer-Led Activities (Release Agreement) prior to their participation.

Family Programming

A number of chapters currently have committees focused on providing trips specifically for families. These outings are to be run like other volunteer-led activities and must comply with local chapter requirements pertaining to running an outing. In addition, the leader should require a minimum ratio of 1 parent/guardian to 3 children whose purpose is to provide on-site supervision while in the field. AMC Leaders have the option of setting age ranges for individual programs based on the nature of the activity being offered.

AMC VOLUNTEER LEADER TOOLS: THE TRIP INTRODUCTION TALK

Arrival and Signing the Waiver

- Greet people as they arrive.
- Introduce yourself as the volunteer Leader.
- Explain the purpose of AMC's required Waiver Form
 - * Participant acknowledges and accepts the risks associated with the activity
 - * Participant releases AMC from liability

Introductions (Gather the Group Together)

- Introduce volunteer Leader(s), sweep, etc.
- Thank AMC members for supporting our mission of conservation, education and recreation. Invite others to join. Announce upcoming events.
- Have participants introduce themselves.
- Describe the trip (conditions; distance/duration; expected pace/time and levels of exertion; turnaround time; etc.)
- Describe the inherent risks involved in the activity of the day; ticks, hypothermia, strainers, ice; etc.
- Affirm that people have appropriate equipment, food, and water. Distribute any group safety gear (water treatment, sleeping bags, cue sheets, etc.)
- Ask if anyone has first aid or other training, and locate first aid kits.
- Review signals/communication strategies as needed.

Personal Responsibility

- Ask people to share concerns and personal medical conditions that could impact the activity with the Leader.
- Remind participants of safety needs (as appropriate),
e.g., insect repellent, sunscreen, drink water, eat snacks, stay dry, tick check, PFD, helmet, etc.
- Ask them to inform a leader about trouble during the trip.
- Explain what to do about needing to use a bathroom.

Ground Rules and Expectations for Group Trips

- Volunteer Leader(s) are trained to make decisions in the best interest of group safety and comfort.
- Participants are responsible for monitoring each other and recognizing hazards.
- We will stay together as a group (stop at junctions, etc.)
- We may need to adjust our pace or plans.
- AMC is a Leave No Trace organization (carry in—carry out; stay on the trail; cell phone etiquette).
- Explain plans for breaks.
- Ask participants to remain close enough to see the person in front of them as applicable.
- Explain what to do if one gets separated from the group.

SAFETY AND FUN!!! LET'S GO.

Some AMC Acronyms and Terms:

ActDB	Activities Database (formerly OLTL, or Online Trip Listings System) This is the searchable database for chapter, camp and staff activities and volunteer opportunities. Training and documentation for use of the system are available for leaders. This is the resource that feeds to <i>AMC Outdoors Magazine</i> , chapter newsletters, chapter websites, and activities.outdoors.org .
AMCAT	AMC Adventure Travel – Any volunteer-led AMC trip that is conducted more than 500 miles away from any AMC Chapter and/or is at least 10 days in duration is considered an Adventure Travel trip.
BOD	Board of Directors
CAN	Conservation Action Network – Monthly e-newsletter with latest information about conservation in the Club and in your chapter, visit www.outdoors.org/conservation .
CHCM	Chapters Committee
COLL	Center for Outdoor Learning and Leadership
CPC	Conservation Programs Committee – Board of Directors level committee that advises on and sets conservation policies. Chapter representation – Chairs of the Interchapter Paddling Committee (IPC), Clubwide Conservation Committee (CCC), and Interchapter Trails Committee
EC/ExComm	Abbreviation for Chapter Executive Committee. Also, Ex Comm.
FG/GATHERING	Fall Gatherings are organized and hosted by chapters on a rotating basis. They are an opportunity for staff and volunteer committees to meet, for networking, and for members to enjoy the local attractions and hospitality of a particular region and chapter. There is a planning guide as well as other resource documents in Summit.
LRGs	Leadership Requirements and Guidelines – Developed and periodically revised by the OLDC.
MWI	Maine Woods Initiative – A major project for the AMC to protect a significant amount of land in Maine. For detailed information, visit the Club's website and sign up for the <i>Maine Woods Initiative Newsletter</i> .
OLL	Outdoor Learning and Leadership – led by the VP for Outdoor Learning and Leadership
OLDC	Outdoor Leadership Development Committee – A Volunteer/Staff Committee that addresses Leadership and Risk Management concerns for chapters, camps, and other volunteer communities. The OLDC has representatives from CHCM, VCCs, Inter-Chapter Trails, AMCAT, and the Inter-Chapter Paddling Committee (IPC)
RDs	Regional Directors – Board of Directors members who represent chapter interests by region at BOD meetings
SF	Salesforce – AMC's membership database
VCC	(Formerly VMF) Volunteer-led Camps & Cabins – full- and self-service camps operated through partnership of volunteers and AMC staff
VCU	Volunteer Club Unit – general term used in AMC guidance documents to describe volunteer-led communities/entities within AMC, such as chapters, camps, and committees.

Other AMC resources:

[About AMC – Fact Sheets, Mission, and Vision](#)

Conservation focal areas: <http://www.outdoors.org/conservation/wherewework>

Volunteer Page: <http://www.outdoors.org/volunteers>

APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB MOUNTAIN LEADERSHIP SCHOOL

LEARN TO LEAD

- Leadership styles
- Trip planning
- Group dynamics

- Accident scene management
- Map and compass
- Low-impact travel

... and more

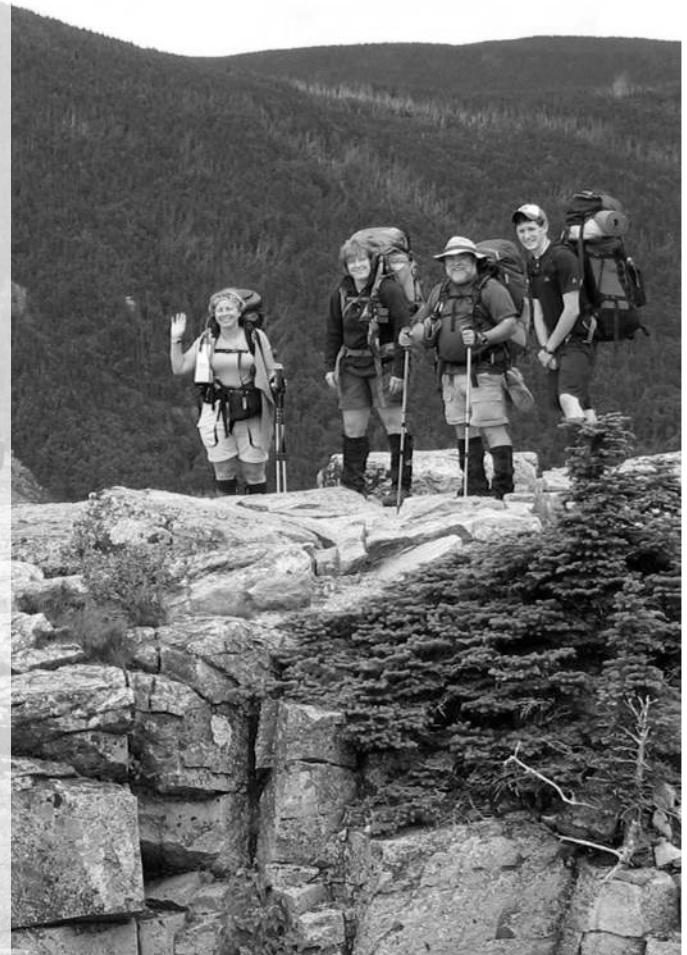
Mountain Leadership School is the AMC's most comprehensive outdoor leadership development program. Our courses are applicable to hiking solo, with friends, or as a trip leader.

Unique to MLS is an experiential learning model in which you use new skills as you acquire them. This hands-on approach is optimal for long-term retention of critical skills. We have multiple offerings, so whether you are relatively new or highly experienced in the outdoors, there is a course for you.

All programs are staffed by highly experienced AMC volunteer instructors with vast backcountry experience. Each five-day program includes four days of backpacking in the White Mountains of NH. In the field you will be a leader, co-leader, and participant as you learn the interpersonal and technical skills needed to take charge in the backcountry.

If you've ever thought about leading or simply want to be better prepared for the challenges of the outdoors, then MLS is the school for you.

Active AMC Trip Leaders who participate in MLS are eligible to apply for a Robert Hansen Memorial Leadership Fund Scholarship. We are pleased to have the opportunity to offer a limited number of scholarships to each AMC Chapter, Facility, and Camp. Each recipient will be awarded up to \$150. Please contact leadership@outdoors.org. for details.



2018 DATES

June 11 - 12

| SOLO Wilderness First Aid & CPR (optional)

June 13 - 17

| Mountain Leadership School Courses:

- MLS for Backpack Leaders
- MLS for Backpack Leaders - Women's Specific
- MLS Advanced Skills

AMC Highland Center in Crawford Notch, New Hampshire
Register: (603) 466 - 2727 | www.outdoors.org/mls

www.outdoors.org/mls



AMC Outdoor Leader Handbook Credits and Sources

Introduction, Decision Making – John Denkowsky, New York North Jersey Chapter Hiking Chair

Trip Planning and Management -- Mark Yerkes, November 1996; Joe Kuzneski, OLDC Past Chair, April 2001; Katherine Byers, March 2003

- *Trip Planning and Management Flowchart*— Jeffrey Mayes, COLL Faculty Member, February 2018
- *Trip Planning Form*—Winslow Carroll, March 2014

Leave No Trace & Backcountry Ethics – Katie Jones, Outdoor Leadership Intern, August 2002

- *Leave No Trace* section integrates materials from the Leave No Trace, Inc. website
- *What Does This Mean for AMC Leaders and Groups?* Section integrates materials from the Northeast Mountains LNT Skills & Ethics Booklet

Weather – AMC Boston Chapter Fall Leadership Training Committee

Lightning – Alex Kosseff, July 1998

First Aid and Accident Scene Management – Alex Kosseff, October 1998

Principles of Wilderness First Aid Kits, Emergency Management – Jonathan Silver, October 1998