

Kamloops Outdoor Club

Guidelines for Outing Leaders

PROGRAM PLANNING

- Come to the program meetings or contact the program committee to schedule your trip.
- List the trip difficulty (star rating system) and give a brief description preferably in writing. Note any special features or requirements.
- To ensure safety and enjoyment of participants, there may be limits to the number of people who can go on a particular outing. Members have priority over non-members.

LEADERS PLANNING

- Decide ahead of time how many participants you will be willing to take (maximum and minimum).
- You have the right to say “no” to any person who phones after your maximum number is reached.
- You have the right to say “no” to any person you consider unable to do the trip.
- When non-members contact you about outing:
 - a)Ask about their previous history and experience in hiking/skiing. Ask for specific detail of what they have done and about any other fitness activities. If in doubt, err in overstressing the difficulty of the trip. Encourage the applicant to participate in a 1*/2** trip first. You may always say “no”.
 - b)Discuss equipment needs. All participants are responsible for adequate clothing, footwear, food, water, and equipment for the conditions anticipated, but appropriate suggestions can be helpful.

HIKE ORGANIZATION

- At the assembly place for the outing, the leader may wait up to 5 min. (at his/her discretion) for late participants.
- At the assembly place the leader may still refuse to take any participants who:
 - a) he/she thinks is unable to do the trip, or
 - b) is not properly equipped.
- Ensure a waiver has been completed for any new prospective member or visitor

AT TRAIL HEAD

- APPOINT A TAIL-ENDER IF MORE THEN 5 HIKERS. This tail-ender role can be rotated during the day.
- Ensure your tail-ender(s) is (are) aware of his/her responsibilities (see below).
- Discuss with group any plans/concerns relative to this outing; for example, outline of the day, tick risks, etc.
- If there are new members, provide introductions, then remind the group about the hikers responsibilities (see guidelines for prospective members).

ON THE TRAIL

- Make a brief stop after the first 15 to 20 minutes on the trail to allow hikers/skiers to remove extra clothes, adjust boots, take a pee break, etc. Ensure regular rest stops throughout the day to promote proper hydration and nourishment. Remember those at the back of the group need at least as much time as those in front (DO NOT pack up and leave as soon as the last person arrives).
- The leader will primarily be the route finder and the tail-ender will be the observer of the condition of the group. However, both should keep an eye on the group to ensure that it does not go too fast for slower members and that no participant is showing signs of distress. The group cannot go faster then the slowest member. It is suggested that if you observe someone much slower than the average pace, speak to them privately at the end of the day and suggest they select an easier grade of hike next time.
- Check regularly that your tail-ender is in reasonable proximity at all times and be prepared to stop or slow down as needed.
- Encourage low impact trail use. Where there is a trail, stay on it in single file so as not to widen trails. Where there is no trail and when crossing meadows, spread out to reduce the damage to the environment. When leaving or joining trails, it is also important to enter and leave at different points to avoid starting new trails. This is especially important in the alpine.
- Encourage members, particularly the tail-ender, to observe landmarks, trail junctions, and to develop their sense of direction. At rest stops discuss where you are and where you are heading.

- Splinter groups must be approved by the leader. It is strongly recommended that 3 people be the normal minimum with 4 the minimum in grizzly country.

Hikers may be allowed by the leader to stay put at a designated safe location, provided that the hike is returning the same way.

- The club has walkie-talkies available. Leaders are urged to use them for:
 - a) extended trips in mountain country hiking or skiing
 - b)white out, grizzlies, etc. can be a concern (for example, in high mountain conditions)
 - c)splinter groups are anticipated

TAILENDER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Make sure all participants are ahead of you
- Observe the state of the participants and note if any are becoming distressed – advise leader
- Ensure group does not get too strung out - advise leader if a slower pace is needed
- Communicate with leader by voice, whistle or walkie-talkie to slow or stop the group
- Watch for people taking separation breaks-they are supposed to advise you first

LOST HIKERS/SKIERS

If someone is suspected to be lost, call the authorities as soon as possible, i.e. park ranger, RCMP, etc. They will assess the situation and organize the appropriate response.

INJURED HIKERS/SKIERS

- Apply first aid.
- Assess if the injured person can be assisted to hike/ski out.
- If the injured person cannot be moved:
 - a) call for help if cell or satellite phone can be used
 - b) send a party to notify the authorities, ensuring that the injured person is not left alone. This party will normally be subject to the conditions regarding splinter groups above.
- Send a WRITTEN description of the injury and the location of the injured party (as much detail as possible) to the authorities.
- Ensure brightly coloured material is available at the site of the injured party; for example, poncho in the open for rescue party sighting.

Membership and waiver forms

The new (2019) waiver form is required by our insurer through FMCBC. Since there is no space on the waiver form for club membership sign-up information, and we are not allowed to alter the form, we have developed a new membership application form.

The waiver and application for membership forms can be found under the member information link on the club website.

Activity leaders should have a few of both documents if needed for guests.

How far in advance do waivers need to be handed out to members and guests?

A copy of the waiver is posted on our website for members and guests to review before participating in a trip. It is not advisable to surprise trip participants with a waiver they have never seen at the trailhead and which they are required to sign if they want to participate. This situation would reduce the strength of the waiver in court.

Leaders should ask guests or prospective members to read the waiver ahead of time and be prepared to sign it at the activity meeting place where they can sign one of the preprinted double sided club waiver forms and where the signature can be properly witnessed.

The waivers are printed double-sided to minimize the possibility that the two pages become separated and are printed in colour to emphasize the message in the highlighted areas.

Three signatures are required for each waiver: Member/participant signs in two places:

- Top of first page to acknowledge that he/she has given up the right to sue or claim compensation
- Bottom of second page to confirm he/she has read and understands the waiver and has waived his/her rights

Witness signature

- The witness needs to be an individual over the age of majority
- The witness can be next-of-kin
- The witness needs to watch the participant sign the waiver and immediately follow with his/her own signature.
- The witness should request a piece of ID (such as a driver's licence) from the individual signing the waiver, in order to confirm the participant's identity if the person is not already known to the witness.
- A waiver should not be witnessed if the member/participant is intoxicated when signing the waiver.
- Don't trivialize the waiver or downplay its legal effect (ie "Don't worry, nothing will happen!"). It's an important legal document that can protect our club, our volunteers and our leaders in the event of a lawsuit.
- The waiver should not be interpreted or explained. It is self-explanatory.
- Members/trip participants must not cross out or delete areas of the waiver. If they do, or if they refuse to sign the waiver altogether, they should not be allowed to go on the trip.

Do minors need to sign waivers?

Minors (under the age of 19) cannot legally sign a waiver and their parent/guardian cannot sign on their behalf to waive any claims they may have or may have in the future against the FMCBC, its member clubs, their club members and FMCBC and club volunteers, leaders and instructors. In this case the waiver offers no protection and your club or organization will be relying on the FMCBC's insurance policy against a claim from a minor.

The minor and his/her parent/guardian should instead sign the [Acknowledgement of Risk \(AR\) form](#), which is based on similar forms, the FMCBC's Universal Waiver and the precedent set in the [Wong v. Lok's Martial Arts Centre](#) court case. An AR form is not a binding contract or release of liability, but it does show the courts that the parent/guardian and the minor were aware of the risks inherent in the activity in which the minor was participating. The AR form also gives the club/trip leader permission to provide first aid and emergency evacuation for the minor if required.

Clubs need to make it clear to their trip leaders that neither a waiver nor an AR form will protect them in the case of a lawsuit from a minor. Both a waiver and AR form are ways to minimize the risk, but the risk cannot be eliminated. Therefore, trip leaders should be made aware if a minor has signed up to participate in their trip, and the trip leader should have the right to refuse allowing a minor to participate if he/she feels that there is too much risk involved.

The AR form should be signed on paper only and no online signing option should be made available by your club. This may change in the future, but for now the reason for this is because the AR form could be confused with a waiver, which could accidentally result in an adult participant signing the non-binding AR form by mistake. Your club needs to make absolute sure that the AR form is only used for minors.

What if the minor is a university/college student?

The FMCBC's policy for university/college clubs is for their student members who are under 19 to sign the Universal Waiver and not the Acknowledgement of Risk form. The reasons for this are:

- It can be difficult for a university student to obtain a signature from his/her parent/guardian because the student has moved away from his/her hometown to attend university.
- By only using a waiver it ensures that no adult participant signs a non-binding AR by mistake.
- It is better to have a signed waiver than no signed form, but in reality neither are going to protect the club or the trip leader in the case of a lawsuit from a minor.

Incident Reporting

What incidents need to be reported?

The [Incident Reporting form](#) is to be used for any significant incident, injury, etc. which occurs during a club sanctioned trip or event and which could result in an insurance claim. Any situation where significant first aid, or a doctor or hospital visit is required, requires a form to be submitted to the FMCBC. If in doubt, fill out the form and then contact the FMCBC for clarification.

How do I report an incident?

Fill out the [Incident Reporting form](#) as soon as possible and submit it to fmcbc@mountainclubs.org. with a copy to our FMCBC cub Rep.

You may be required to answer some follow-up questions from our insurer, including whether the incident took place during a club-sanctioned trip. You may also be asked to submit a copy of the signed waiver.

To make the incident reporting process go as smoothly as possible, clubs should document and keep a record of all of their trips, and also have a well-organized system for storing waivers so you can produce them when required.

Revised: May 2019