

Safety Committee Charter

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Safety Committee is to prevent accidents in The Mountaineers by promoting a culture and structure of safety across all activities. The Committee achieves this by providing resources for safety education and training of leaders and instructors and coordinating with safety leads across the organization. The committee is responsible for collecting and reviewing incident data and sharing trends and lessons learned with Mountaineers volunteer leaders across the organization.

This Committee reports to the Branch Leadership Council.

2. Values statement

Our committee acknowledges that safety in outdoor programs is more than preventing physical harm. It's about creating an environment where participants feel secure, supported, and free to take healthy risks, connect with others, and explore the natural world without fear of judgment or exclusion. We encourage a culture of reporting all types of safety incidents and concerns by all types of participants. Injurious incidents may be seen in many forms, such as physical, emotional, and or perceived unintended actions. We want safety reporters to feel empowered to report their own and others' errors without fear of judgement or retaliation, with the goal of learning and improving as an organization.

3. Functions

Following are general duties of committee members:

- a) Develop and perform standardized collection of incident data from all branches, properties and org-wide committees (eg. global adventures), via incident report, safety reports within activity feedback forms, and other reports, and make this data available to all branches on the Mountaineers website.
- b) Collect, develop and distribute safety education and knowledge including tasks such as:
 - Supporting org-wide activity committees and their related sub-committees by distributing incident report data
 - Supporting efforts to standardize safety concepts
 - Implementing measures to reduce likelihood and/or impact of known potential hazards or risks.
- c) Maintain the safety website and review content on an annual basis for updated forms and resources, including a periodic review of form and process for submitting an incident report.
- d) Share diverse safety stories and best practices on a periodic basis using The Mountaineers blog.
- e) Provide safety reports on safety trends to The Mountaineers Branch Leadership Council and Risk Management Committee as needed.

- f) Liaison with Mountaineers staff, the Equity and Inclusion Committee and the Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault prevention committee to ensure that the full spectrum of safety concerns are being addressed across the organization .¹
- g) Facilitate additional investigation for complex incidents.

4. Membership and Governance

Committee members must be Mountaineers members in good standing. The Safety Committee is composed of a Branch Safety Officer (or co-officers) from all 7 branches and the global adventures committee, VP of outdoor centers and the Safety Chairperson. This committee shall be responsible for the governance of the Safety Committee, including, but limited to making rules and determining policy for safe activities, engagement and outreach.

The committee may create, restructure, or dissolve sub-committees to carry out purposes of the Activity, appoint sub-committee officers and members, and delegate certain powers and duties to sub-committees.

Safety committee representatives from Mountaineers activity committees are strongly encouraged to join committee meetings and participate in safety subcommittees. The representatives are valued for their direct connection to the various activities. The representatives are essential for communicating and propagating best safety practices to the activities.

The roles of this committee are:

a) Safety Chairperson:

- i) schedules and facilitates Safety meetings.
- ii) responsible for oversight of incident reporting shared on a periodic basis on the website.
- iii) serves on the Risk Management Committee, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Prevention committee and liaises with Branch Leadership council.
- iv) Collecting standardized incident data and ensuring the security of the data.
- v) Voting member of the Safety Committee

b) Safety Officers. All branches each have a single safety officer (or co-officers). Global adventures (a multi-branch group) also has a single officer and the Outdoor Centers has a single officer (the VP of Outdoor Centers or otherwise designated proxy).

¹ Incident reports of violations of policy's concerning **diversity, equity, inclusion** and sexual harassment will be distributed to designated Mountaineers staff and will not be distributed to the standard incident distribution list.

- i) responsible for sorting incident reports for their designated branch or outdoor center
- ii) Distribute Incident reports to the associated Activity Safety Representative
- iii) Responsible for the role of Activity Safety Representative (ASR) where no-known exists for given activity.
- iv) Oversee Activity Safety Rep role and recruitment and workflows for safety aspects as flow to the respective sub-committees
- v) Provide to the Safety Chair, a yearly report of steps each activity will positively take to address hazards (remediation) as seen in prior year incident reports.
- vi) Voting member of the Safety Committee (if position is co-chaired, they collectively will have one vote)

c) *Immediate Past Safety Chairperson (IPSC):*

- i) Provides guidance, historic context, and assistance to the Chair.
- ii) Back-up representative on the Risk Management Committee, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Prevention committees, and backup liaison with Branch Leadership council in the event the Safety Chairperson is unavailable.
- iii) Non-voting member of the Safety committee.

d) *Activity Safety Representative (ASR):*

- i) Represents their individual activity committee,
- ii) may participate in activity council meetings,
- iii) Assist branch safety officers in preparing the yearly hazard remediation steps of year's incident hazards
- iv) responsible for sharing incident reports and Safety committee notes to their respective committee
- v) Provide guidance on safety related training documentation their committee may develop
- vi) Non-voting member of the Safety Committee Council

5. Quorum: A minimum of four safety officers and the Safety chairperson must be present for a meeting to commence. This is also the voting quorum required.

6. Voting

A motion to bring business before the Committee for vote may be made by any two Committee Members*, not including the Chairperson. Additionally, any Mountaineers member is welcome to address the Committee in writing to discuss proposed business. Activity safety reps should work with branch safety officers to make a motion for a vote. The Committee Chairperson must bring forward any proposed business to the subsequent meeting. They may choose to invite the member who proposed the business to join the meeting as a guest to present the topic.

Any business that comes before the Committee for a vote must receive a simple majority vote of the eligible Committee Members present, including voted proxies, in order to be adopted.

- a) Each Safety Committee Council Member other than the Chairperson shall be eligible to cast votes for all motions and other Committee business. Each Council Member may cast a single vote. The Chairperson shall only cast their vote in the event of a tie, but they are free to vote any and all proxies that have been delegated to them.
- b) Proxy - In the event that a Council Member other than the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting, they may delegate their proxy to another individual in attendance. A verifiable proxy may be in, but not necessarily limited to, the following formats: written, email, text message, or voicemail.

7. Term of Service

The Chair and Branch Safety Officers shall serve for a period of two (2) years, with terms beginning at the start of the calendar year, or as agreed upon by incoming and departing officers.

The Chair will serve no longer than two terms. Extension beyond two terms is possible as long as $\frac{2}{3}$ of the current safety officers approve. Chairs are encouraged to find a Chair Elect that participates in meetings leading up to the changeover in positions (a chair elect is a non-voting member). If a chair elect is not designated and a replacement chair is not found, The Mountaineers Board of Directors Executive committee is responsible for nominating and appointing a new chair.

Branch Safety Officers do not have limits² on the number of terms they can serve. In the event that a replacement cannot be found for a branch safety officer, the Safety Chairperson or Branch Chair may either temporarily extend the term of the incumbent, or appoint an interim officer for a period of up to one (1) year or until such time that a replacement can be found.

Activity Safety representatives are encouraged to serve two year terms and do not have a limit on the number of terms they can serve.

8. Removal of Members

No Committee Member shall be removed from the Committee except for good cause including not following Prohibited Behavior policy, Member Code of Ethics etc. The process of removal may be initiated upon a two-thirds vote of the Safety Committee. A Safety Committee Member may then be removed from the Safety roster in accordance with the policies and procedures then in place for the removal of volunteers by The Mountaineers.

² Mountaineers Safety Committee acknowledges that tenured safety officers accumulate deep institutional knowledge that is helpful for identifying safety trends, lessons learned and any recurring issues that may not be documented formally. Continuity in safety leadership allows for consistent communications and trust to be built within other volunteer leadership.