



# The Mountaineers Code of Ethics

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## I. Introduction and Purpose

The Mountaineers Code of Ethics (“Code”) defines the shared values, expectations, and guiding principles that shape how all members of The Mountaineers community interact in order to create and maintain a safe, respectful, inclusive, and welcoming environment.

This Code applies to all Mountaineers activities, programs, courses, trips, events, facilities, online spaces, and any situation where someone is representing The Mountaineers. It provides the foundation for our culture and guides decisions and behaviors that support our mission to help people explore, conserve, learn about, and enjoy the lands and waters of the Pacific Northwest and beyond.

For detailed behavioral expectations and enforcement procedures, see the [Behavior Standards Policy](#).

## II. Alignment with Mission and Core Values

In everything we do at The Mountaineers we strive to always act in a manner consistent with our [Mission](#) and [Core Values](#). As a volunteer-driven, member organization we strive to provide opportunities for all to enjoy outdoor experiences in a diverse and inclusive community that inspires teamwork, mutual support, and respect.

## III. Expectations of Members

The Mountaineers is a member-based organization. When engaged in Mountaineers activities or visiting Mountaineers facilities, it is expected that members will:

- Act ethically and respectfully in order to contribute to a safe and engaging learning environment;
- Engage with all other members with integrity and honesty;
- Follow Mountaineers policies, including behavioral policies and procedures, such as this Code and the Behavior Standards Policy;
- Treat people with dignity, respect and compassion to foster a trusting, emotionally-safe environment free of harassment, intimidation, and unlawful discrimination;
- Recognize that there are emotional and physical risks in Mountaineers activities and raise any safety concerns as they arise so as to contribute to a safer environment for all;
- Respect others’ safety and boundaries;
- Represent The Mountaineers in a manner consistent with our values; and
- Speak up and/or report problem behavior that is inconsistent with this Code and/or our Behavior Standards Policy.

Members shall not engage in any problem behaviors, including those that constitute threats, discrimination, other forms of harassment and other behaviors as outlined in the Behavior Standards Policy.

A guest member is not a dues-paying Mountaineers member but is one who participates in an official Mountaineers activity as a guest. Guest members are held to the same expectations as Mountaineers members and are expected to adhere to this Code and the Behavior Standards Policy.

#### **IV. Expectations of Leaders**

For purposes of this policy, the term “leader” applies to those serving in leadership roles, including:

- Volunteers who are in charge of programs, activities, trips, branch administration, and running outdoor centers;
- Volunteers who are instructors;
- Organization-wide volunteer roles such as serving on the Board of Directors and participating on committees and councils; and
- Mountaineers employees and anyone contracted to perform work on behalf of The Mountaineers.

Mountaineers leaders often have responsibilities and/or authority that put them in positions of power. Leaders are held to higher standards. In addition to the Expectations of Members listed above, Mountaineers leaders in any capacity are expected to:

- Model our values and standards of behavior for other Mountaineers members and the broader outdoor community;
- Further the mission and goals of The Mountaineers;
- Foster safe, inclusive environments;
- Complete incident reporting accurately, honestly, and promptly;
- Have and maintain the necessary skills and experience to competently manage the risks associated with activities they lead and/or instruct for both themselves and others;
- Disclose conflicts of interests, real or apparent, that may compromise objectivity when representing The Mountaineers during any activities like volunteer selections or investigations;
- Promote relationships based on mutual respect, fairness and openness;
- Use a position of authority within the organization with integrity. Coercion or other abuses of power will not be tolerated; and
- Ensure fair and inclusive hiring, promotions, or appointments for all positions, including of volunteers.

These expectations apply to all leaders. Certain leadership positions have additional responsibilities and expectations. For example the Board directors have fiduciary responsibilities to the organization, committee leadership roles have responsibilities defined by their charters, and staff are bound by policies in the employee handbook.

#### **V. Commitment to Safety and Learning**

The Mountaineers is committed to excelling as a learning organization and fostering continuous improvement. For example, by reporting and tracking accidents, injuries, and near-miss incidents the organization strives to learn and improve member experience and risk-management skills as they explore the great outdoors.

As a learning organization, we expect members and especially leaders, to be self-reflective when mistakes are made, commit to change, and rectify missteps. Holding ourselves accountable and apologizing for making a mistake often goes a long way.

The Mountaineers is also committed to remaining relevant, and is responsive to changes in use of technologies, techniques, and best practices associated with the programs we teach and lead, in order to meet the needs of volunteer leaders, instructors, and members.

## **VI. Commitment to Inclusiveness and Diversity**

The Mountaineers strives to be a model of diversity and inclusion, creating an environment where people can find belonging in the outdoors; we actively promote equity throughout all aspects of our operations. We value, respect and celebrate the unique attributes, characteristics and perspectives that make each person who they are. We believe that bringing diverse individuals together enriches our community and organization.

Striving for a sense of belonging in the outdoors is rooted in our values as well as our goal to make both physically and emotionally safe experiences possible. By achieving belonging, participants are able to focus on the task in front of them and fully engage in their environment. A more level playing field is created when everyone is respected, accepted, and has a voice. This leads to more positive outdoor experiences, better decision-making, and a stronger culture.

## **VII. Conclusion**

This Code and the Behavior Standards Policy shall be applied consistently by all members of The Mountaineers community to foster the pursuit of our Mission and a culture rooted in our Core Values.