

HIKE / BACKPACK LEADER SEMINAR

Mountaineers Olympia Branch

Jan 25. 2022 6:30 PM



LEADER BADGES



Backpack Leader



Hike Leader

AGENDA

- Introductions/General Information
- Why become a leader?
- How to become a hike/backpack leader
- Hike definition and standards
- Steps for planning, conducting closing hikes
 - Using the Mountaineers Website
- Decision making and difficult situations
- Standards and Policies
- Leadership decision making scenarios
- Questions and Closing

PRESENTERS

- Dee Ann Kline (deeannk3@gmail.com) Naturalist Hikes
- Steve Payne (hikersteve2012@gmail.com) Conditioning Hiking Series
- Monty Pratt (spartan4049@yahoo.com) Backpacking
- Becky Andrade (becky.andrade@gmail.com) Conditioning Hiking Series
- Dixie Havlak (havlakrd@comcast.net) Youth and Family Activities

GENERAL INFORMATION

- ▣ After the seminar, Monty will email the students a link to this presentation.
- ▣ Questions are encouraged. Use the chat option, and the instructors try to answer questions.
- ▣ Hike/Backpack leader expectations.
- ▣ The survey shows a mix of experience, and interests.

WHY BECOME A HIKE LEADER

1. Develop and learn new skills
2. Your hike - Your way (80% rule)
3. Pay it forward (and backward)
4. Mountaineers culture and mission
5. Relationships - friendships, mentoring
6. Promote the power of nature
7. Olympia Hiking and Backpacking Leader Options:
 - a. Day Hikes
 - b. Conditioning Hiking Series (CHS) Hikes
 - c. Family Hikes
 - d. Naturalist Hikes
 - e. Backpacking



HOW TO BECOME A HIKE (BACKPACK) LEADER

1. Membership and Age
2. Attend a hike leaders workshop - CHECK!
3. Mentorship and Hikes
 - Selecting a Mentor
 - Two Hikes with Mentor - one as assistant, one as leader
4. Be an active Mountaineer - courses, activities, culture, etc.
5. Display the following competencies:
 - a. Knowledge of Standards and Policies
 - b. Group Leadership
 - c. Technical Skills
 - d. Navigation
 - e. Mountain Safety Skills
 - f. First Aid and Emergency preparedness



HOW TO BECOME A BACKPACK LEADER

1. Have the Hike Leader Badge
2. Display the following competencies:
 - a. Backpacking Gear
 - b. Backpacking food and water
 - c. Camp set up
 - d. Pacing and Conditioning
3. Participate in 3 Mountaineers Backpack trips
4. Successfully co-lead one backpack trip with a mentor



The Committee will review qualifications of prospective hike/backpack leaders as appropriate and may recommend additional steps such as leading additional mentored hikes (or backpacks).

GENERALLY, TO BECOME A HIKE OR BACKPACK LEADER

New Mountaineers member with mostly outside experience? Participate in a few Mountaineers hikes or backpacks before becoming a Mountaineers hike or backpack leader.

Want to lead Mountaineers backpacking trips? Lead some Mountaineers hikes first, complete the application with our backpacking background, and then lead a mentored backpack trip.

Already a Mountaineers climb or scramble leader? We recommend that you lead your first hike or backpack with a mentor because of the very different pool of people and challenges you may encounter.

FAMILY HIKE LEADER

1. Get a Youth Qualified Badge

---includes background check

---will be evolving

2. Follow general hike leader guidelines

3. Attend a Family Hike Leader training class or have one- on-one training

4. Be an assistant leader on a mentored Family Hike

5. Plan, scout, list, and lead a Family Hike with a Mentor (Demonstrate basic competency in leadership Skills)

6. Be approved by Mentor & Hiking Committee

**** Current adult hike leaders should complete steps 3 and 4 to become a Family Hike Leader**

****Family Hike Leader Badges may become a separate badge from Hike Leader in future but currently there are no specific Family Hike Leader Badges.**

****Family Backpack Leaders are also generic Backpack Leaders who have been mentored on Family Backpacking.**

FAMILY HIKE LEADER



Lead hikes for
Pathfinders, Explorers
or Junior MAC

**Family Hiking
and Backpack
Leaders can lead
a variety of
activities**



Lead Outreach hikes
with other groups



Lead Family Hikes
& Adventures



Lead Groups at
Summer Camps or
Vacation Camps



Lead Family or camp
Backpacking Trips

WHAT IS A MOUNTAINEERS “HIKE”

- Club-sponsored walking trips > 2 miles
- Restricted to trails/roads/urban pathways
 - Snow?
 - Appropriate for the type of hike and expected skills of participants
- Party size
 - Minimum of 3, Maximum of 12, recommended limit of 8 if new leader
 - Backpack party size is limited to the number of tent sites available.
- Liability coverage if properly listed and led



HIKE RATINGS

Difficulty: Route

- Casual Up to 4 mi RT and up to 600 ft elev gain
- Easy (E) Up to 8 mi RT with up to 1,200 ft elev gain
- Moderate (M) Up to 12 mi RT or 1,200-2,500 ft elev gain
- Strenuous (S) Up to 14 mi RT or 2,500-3,500 ft elev gain
- Very Strenuous (VS) Over 14 mi RT or over 3,500 ft elev gain

Leader Rating: How the Leader Plans to Cover the Route

- For Beginners **Average** pace <1 mph - no technical challenges or special skills required
- Casual **Average** pace <1 mph- no technical challenges or special skills required
- Easy **Average** pace 1.0-1.5 mph- no technical challenges or special skills required
- Moderate **Average** pace 1.5-2.0 mph, or easy route with overnight Pack, or some route challenges
- Challenging **Average** pace > 2 mph, or a moderate route with an overnight pack, or significant route challenges or skills

PLANNING A HIKE OR BACKPACK

- Know the Kinds of Hikes you Like to Lead
- Consider Combining Shorter Trails in the Same Vicinity
- Consider the Season of the Year
- Important: Scout the trip if you have not been on the hike.
- Post a Hike as Early as You Like, but Only Open it for Registration 3-4 Weeks Prior to the Hike
- Add Co-Leader or Assistant Leader (may add prior to registration opening date)
- Have a Back Up Plan

PRE-TRIP RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMUNICATION

- Keep an Eye on the Roster
- OK to screen Participants (Leader Permission, e-mail/call)
- Check Leader Notes on the Roster
- Ensure you Have Good Contact Information
- If your Trip Requires Certain Skills and/or Conditioning, Ask Detailed Questions to Ensure That They are Capable
- Week of the Hike: Check Conditions

PRE-TRIP RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMUNICATION - HIKE

When Registration Closes, Send out Hello Hikers Email.

- Meeting instructions: time to meet and time to leave
- Address or GPS link of meeting sites
- Your car description, license plate and cell phone
- Required pass
- Any updated weather or trail conditions

Reminder to bring things such as extra water, rain clothes,

- Reminder to bring money for carpooling and any plans for stopping after the hike
- Carpool Information
- Proof of Vaccination

PRE-TRIP RESPONSIBILITIES AND COMMUNICATION - ADDITIONAL BACKPACK

- Approximate daily schedule (start and end times)
- Daily elevation gain, mileage, locations of water and campsites
- Meal planning details
- Route Alternatives



LEADER PREPARATION

- **Print** 2 copies of the Participant Roster with emergency numbers
- Check Your 10 Essentials
- Make Copies of Directions to Trailhead- Put your phone # on each copy
- Make Copies of the Map
- Gas Up
- Check Website Before Leaving House
- Make Sure your Cell Phone is Charged and On

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE MEETING SITE

- Arrive Early
- Check Cell Phone Regularly
- Greeting/roll call
- Attempt to Contact late participants
- Review Critical Information- parking at the trailhead, road conditions
- If carpooling, allow Hikers to Select a Car to Ride in
- Note a Contact Person and Cell Number for Each Car. Make Sure all Cars Have Your Cell Phone #.

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE TRAILHEAD

▣ Group Introduction

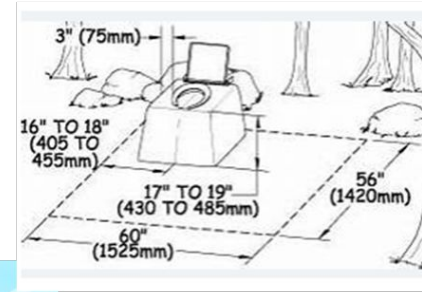
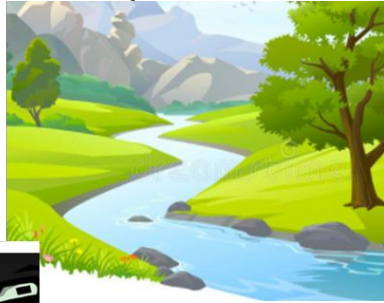
▣ Trail Information

- Pace
- Group Safety reminders
- Review map
- When will breaks occur - party separation
- If not going to the end of the trail, establish turn around time
- Ask for first aid leader and ask hikers to inform first aid leader of medical conditions that could impact the hike
- Remind drivers to post passes. Lock your doors.
- Remind hikers of social distancing and facemask protocol
- Designate a sweep

RESPONSIBILITIES ON THE TRAIL

- ❑ Manage Time and Stay on Break Schedule
- ❑ Encourage Hydration and Snacking
- ❑ Get to Know People
- ❑ Continually Assess Condition of Hikers
- ❑ Manage the Pace for Safety, Morale and Fun of Everyone
- ❑ Provide Guidance for Getting around Obstacles
- ❑ Rationale for Splitting a Group
- ❑ Don't be Afraid to Make an Unpopular call if YOU Believe it is for the Safety of the Group or Individuals
- ❑ Problem behaviors

RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE CAMPSITE (BACKPACKING)



RESPONSIBILITIES AFTER THE TRIP

- Ensure Everyone Has Returned to the Trailhead
- Ensure All Vehicles Start Before Leaving
- Close the Hike and Complete Online Trip Report Within One Week
- If Necessary, Fill out Incident Report. Comments can be added regarding specific participant. Participants may report concern to hike leader or Hiking Chairs
- Send Email to Hikers- Thanking Them for Joining You and Attach any Photos
- Read Participant Feedback

USING THE MOUNTAINEERS WEBSITE

- Instructor will demonstrate how a leader can post a hike on the Mountaineers website.

MAKING DECISIONS

- ❑ Some decisions must be made quickly and/or cannot be democratic (safety, harassment, illegal behavior)
- ❑ When there really is flexibility for group engagement in a decision, it can bring the group together and add ownership!
- ❑ Start with brainstorming options – leader can summarize the options, then take a non-binding vote
- ❑ Give participants a chance to discuss and advocate for their positions
- ❑ Then take a final vote and ask everyone to support it

DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT PARTICIPANT AND/OR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

- ❑ Don't put it off!
- ❑ De-escalate - don't be aggressive or confrontational
- ❑ Deal in private – don't humiliate someone in front of others
- ❑ Explain what you observe and why it concerns you – how could it impact the trip and/or the group – what changes need to happen
- ❑ Seek to understand their concerns/point of view – active listening
- ❑ Ask them to help you resolve the situation

DEALING WITH A DIFFICULT PARTICIPANT AND/OR UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOR

- Stay calm and manage your emotional state
- If you can accommodate safely, do so
- If their behavior puts the enjoyment or safety of any other group member at risk, then you need to act to stop that behavior.
- Emotional safety and physical safety are important!
- Harassment, objectionable language, inappropriate conversations or touching are unacceptable on a Mountaineers activity.

STANDARDS AND POLICIES

Club Covid-19 Standards

EMERGENCIES

LOW IMPACT RECREATION

Age Considerations

Liability

Lost Hiker

Carpooling

Incident Reporting

Privacy

These subjects are covered in the Leader Resources page and the e-learning class “Becoming A Mountaineers Leader”.

SCENARIOS

See separate handout.

QUESTIONS

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THANK YOU!

LEADER RESOURCES

Olympia Hiking & Backpacking Committee

- Mountaineers.org/Olympia
- Branch Committee Website:
 - <https://www.mountaineers.org/locations-lodges/olympia-branch/committees/olympia-hiking-backpacking-committee>
- Mountaineers Resources:
 - <https://www.mountaineers.org/volunteer/leader-resources/leader-resources>
 - <https://www.mountaineers.org/courses/virtual-education-center>
 - <https://www.mountaineers.org/about/vision-leadership/board-of-directors/committees/elearning/course-templates/leadership-the-mountaineers/becoming-a-mountaineers-leader-the-mountaineers-2018>
 - <https://www.mountaineers.org/about/vision-leadership/board-of-directors/committees/elearning/course-templates/test-your-low-impact-recreation-skills-elearning-course/test-your-low-impact-recreation-skills-elearning-course>