

# The Mountaineers Olympia Branch

## Hiking & Backpacking Committee Hike/Backpack Leader Qualifications

### Required Qualifications for Hike Leaders:

- ❖ Be a current Mountaineers member, at least 18 years old.
- ❖ Lead two mentored hikes with a qualified Hike Leader as mentor. For the first hike, be Assistant Leader with the mentor as Leader. For the second hike – choose the trip, handle logistics, and be the Leader with the mentor assisting.
- ❖ Demonstrated knowledge of The Mountaineers club culture and processes, as well as enthusiasm for leading hikes (e.g. Graduation from courses, volunteerism, participating in trips).
- ❖ Demonstrated ability to meet club wide minimum standards, which include:

Hike Leaders must have competence in the following as appropriate for their trips:

- Group leadership
- Successfully complete Wilderness Navigation or On-Trail Navigation within 1 year
- Mountain safety, including identification of hazards and actions to avoid injury
- Successfully Complete Wilderness First Aid or Mountaineering Oriented First Aid (WFA or MOFA) within 1 year\*
- Emergency preparedness (how to summon help should it be needed)
- Leave No Trace / Low Impact Recreation skills

\*IF Attending MOFA or WFA with the Olympia Branch, the following leader benefit will cover all or part of the cost of acquiring the MOFA or WFA course requirement. WFA is free (Normally \$150) to existing Leaders with 2 or more activity leads in the past 12 months (field trips, teaching lectures, etc don't count). WFA as is currently offered, is 8 hours of on-line self study, and 8 hours of in person practice/scenarios/lecture.

MOFA is now WFA (as above ) plus 2 full in person days- normally \$250 for MOFA/WFA but \$100 for leaders with 2 activity leads in the last 12 months.

The MOFA/WFA class is 8 hours self study and 3 full in person days. These students would receive 2 badges- MOFA and WFA.

If a new leader is unable to participate in MOFA or WFA with the Olympia Branch, then after successfully leading 2 hikes in a 12 month period, and successfully completing WFA or MOFA, they may submit for reimbursement of up to 50% of the cost of the WFA or MOFA course offered through another branch.

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- Backpacking Leaders (Additional to above Hike Leader skills):
  - Backpacking Gear and planning
  - Backpacking food and water planning
  - Camp set up
  - Pacing
  - Conditioning
  - Participate in 3 Mountaineers Backpack trips. You are encouraged to sign up as assistant leader for at least one of these trips).
  - Successfully co-lead one backpack trip, with one of the existing Olympia Backpack leaders.
  - Lead at least two backpack trips for the Olympia branch over a 2-year period.
  - For backpack leader qualification, Wilderness Navigation is required
  
- ❖ The Committee will review qualifications prospective hike leaders as appropriate and may recommend additional steps such as leading additional mentored hikes (or backpacks) if it appears warranted.

### **Recommended:**

- ◆ Graduation from a Mountaineers Leadership course.
- ◆ Attend a New Hike/Backpack Leader Seminar with the Mountaineers. This does not substitute for a Leadership course.

### **Expectations:**

- ◆ Hike Leaders successfully lead at least two hikes as primary leader or co-leader per year
- ◆ Backpack Leaders successfully lead at least two backpack trips for the Olympia branch as primary leader or co-leader over two years - in a safe manner - to remain qualified as an active backpack leader.
- ◆ Support the Mountaineers philosophies and uphold its standards and goals.

## The Mountaineers Olympia Branch

### Process for becoming a new Hike Leader:

1. Complete the online leader application located at:  
<https://www.mountaineers.org/volunteer/volunteer-with-us/leader-applications/hike-backpack-urban-walk-leader-application>
2. New Hike leader is paired with a mentor – either an experienced hike leader that the new leader has contacted or by contacting the Committee Chair for assistance in connecting with a hike leader mentor.
3. **First hike** – the new hike leader will act as assistant lead on a hike that the mentor sets up, observing and asking questions. This is an opportunity for the mentor to communicate why they are setting things up a certain way, how they go about screening participants, trailhead discussion, methods of leading and safe return to the trailhead after the hike. During both mentored hikes, the Mentor may also advise the mentored leader of issues, tips, and advice that will help the mentored leader succeed as a hike leader. The Mentored will also advise the new hike leader on the process of updating the Mountaineers activity to reflect any issues. This includes how to set individual results (turn-around, needs improvement, successful, etc.) and how to close out the trip.

Once this first mentored hike is completed successfully and the new leader is ready to list their mentored hike, contact the Hiking Committee Chair to have the new leader added to the leader roster as a contingent leader, which will allow them to list their hike for the 2<sup>nd</sup> mentored hike.

4. **Second Hike** – Mentored Hike leader now chooses the hike, lists the hike on the Mountaineers.org website, screens the participants, prepares the pre-trip communications, leads the trailhead meeting, leads the hike, leads the post-trip meeting at the trailhead, records individual results, and closes the hike on the Mountaineers website.
5. Once the new hike leader has completed both hikes (one if a graduate of a Mountaineers Outdoor Leadership course (the new hike leader seminar does not substitute for this), the Mentor will fill out the attached ***Mentored Lead Report Form***.

Upon successful completion of the two hikes listed above, and determination by Mentor that the hike leader is ready, the new hike leader is ready to lead their own hikes. The Committee chair must be notified to grant the new leader their badge, allowing them to lead their own hikes.

New hike leaders are encouraged to contact their mentor or the Committee Chair with any questions or concerns. The new hike leader is also encouraged to limit the size of their hikes to 6-8 participants or less and to have an assistant hike leader designated until they feel comfortable leading hikes on their own.

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## Process for becoming a new **Backpack Leader**:

1. Active Hike Leader
2. Participate in 3 Mountaineers backpack trips.
3. Successfully co-lead one backpack trip, with one of the existing backpack Olympia leaders. Demonstrate the competencies in the areas defined by the Olympia Hike/Backpack Leader Qualifications.
4. Lead at least two backpack trips for the Olympia branch over a 2-year period to remain on the active leader list. Upon receiving a favorable report from the mentor, one of the chairs will add you as an official backpack leader for Olympia.

## Becoming a Hike Leader

### 1. Prospective Leader:

- Competent in Hike Leader skills:
  - Group Leadership
  - Technical Skills
  - Mountain Safety Skills
  - Graduate of Wilderness First Aid or MOFA\*
  - Graduate of Wilderness Navigation or On Trail Navigation\*
  - Emergency Preparedness
  - Knowledge of Standards & Policies

\*Must successfully complete WFA/MOFA and Navigation within 1 year of becoming leader.



### 2. Identify your mentor

(Ask someone you know and respect if they will allow you to participate as Assistant Leader on a hike)

Or

Contact Hiking Chair for assistance in connecting with a mentor.

### 3. Prepare to Lead your Mentored Hike

- (Ask someone you know and respect if they will mentor you on a hike or Contact Hiking Chair for assistance in connecting with a mentor.)
- Contact Hiking Chair to be listed as provisional leader (this must be done so you can list a hike on your own.)
- Select and list the hike of your choice
- Have mentor listed as your co-leader
- Manage roster, pre- and post-hike arrangements
- Properly list volunteer hours for hike leaders and close activity.



### 4. Mentored Lead Report Form

- Mentor fills out "Mentored Lead Report Form" and submits it to the Hiking Chair.
- Hiking Chair reviews the form and, if appropriate, forwards to hiking committee for review.
- Once new leader is approved, Hiking Chair will grant new hike leader the Hike Leader badge.
- Hiking Chair will notify new hike leader of status.



### 5. Hike Leader

- Member in good standing
- Current in skills and knowledge for hikes being lead
- Lead 2 hikes each year to remain current

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## Want to go further and lead more activities?

### Backpack Leader

Monty Pratt  
[Spartan4049@yahoo.com](mailto:Spartan4049@yahoo.com)

#### REQUIREMENTS

- Active Hike Leader
- Participate in 3 Mountaineers Backpack trips. You are encouraged to sign up for at least one of these backpack trips.
- Successfully co-lead one backpack trip, with one of the existing backpack Olympia leaders. Demonstrate the competencies in the areas defined by the Olympia Hike/Backpack Leader Qualifications.
- Agree to lead at least two backpack trips for the Olympia branch over a two year period to remain on the active leader list.

#### REQUIRED

- MOFA/WFA
- Mountaineers Navigation course

### Youth & Family Activities

Dixie Havlack  
[havlakrd@comcast.net](mailto:havlakrd@comcast.net)  
Or  
Clair Edwards  
[clairee@mountaineers.org](mailto:clairee@mountaineers.org)

#### REQUIREMENTS

- Active Hike Leader
- Qualified Youth Leader
- Additional training

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**MENTORED LEADER REPORT FORM (V012024)**

Name of prospective leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Outing: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Outing: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Prospective Leader Ratings (mark one for each quality)

<b>QUALITY</b>	<b>EXCELLENT</b>	<b>GOOD</b>	<b>FAIR</b>	<b>POOR</b>
Personal Organization				
Attitude				
Interpersonal Communication				
Taking Responsibility				
Resolving Conflicts				
Exhibiting Sensitivity				
Good Sense and Awareness				
Anticipated Problems / Offered Ideas				
Showed Patience				
Made Sound and Prudent Decisions				

Other comments including prospective leader strengths and opportunities for improvement

Prospective leader appears ready to lead approved activities?

Yes

No

Not Sure