

Seattle Climbing Committee Charter

Last ratified by SBC: Nov 2025

1. Activity Committee Name

The Activity name shall be -- Seattle Climbing Committee.

2. Authority

This Seattle Climbing Charter is adopted by the authority of The Seattle Branch Council Charter.

2. Purpose and Mission

The mission of the Seattle Climbing Committee is to promote safe and enjoyable climbing and create climbers that are stewards for the areas where we recreate. On behalf of the Seattle Branch of The Mountaineers, the Committee offers courses in climbing, oversees the Branch's climbing program, sponsors climbs and recruits, develops and supports volunteer climb leaders.

Climbing Committee Responsibilities

- Work to achieve the mission and goals of the Seattle Branch and The Mountaineers organization.
- Develop a diverse, open and inclusive population of members, students, instructors and leaders.
- Conduct climbing courses and seminars. This includes establishing eligibility requirements for the courses as well as their equivalency.
- Set fees for the seminars, climbing courses, and course equivalencies. The Committee will recommend fees based upon organizational guidance.
- Approve or reject Climbing Course graduation and equivalency petitions.
- Establish leader and instructor qualifications, and maintain a current climbing Leader and Instructor list.
- Review climbing trips for compliance with Climbing Activity Standards, including regular review of feedback.
- Review and monitor maintenance and replacement of climbing equipment managed by the Committee.
- Coordinate with the branch and club wide Safety Committee investigating climbing accidents and near misses originating from trips sponsored by the Seattle Climbing Committee and make recommendations or adjustments as appropriate.
- Administer Climbing awards and leader incentives.
- Annually review Seattle Branch Climbing policies and documents.

4. Membership

Membership in the Seattle Climbing Committee is open to all current Mountaineers members in good standing who have completed a Mountaineers climbing course as a student or instructor.

5. Governance

The Seattle Climbing Committee shall be governed by an Executive Committee and committee members (henceforth the Committee). Governance includes but is not limited to: (1) making rules and determining policies, procedures and methods to accomplish Activity programs and courses; (2) maintaining Activity assets & property; (3) preparing and managing Activity annual budget; (4) oversight of Activity expenditures and (5) furthering Activity efforts in support of The Mountaineers.

Additionally, the Committee may (1) elect committee Officers and appoint subcommittee Chairs; (2) create, restructure, or dissolve sub-committees to carry out specific purposes of the Activity; (3) delegate to sub-committees Committee powers and duties.

The Basic and Intermediate subcommittees appoint incoming Basic and Intermediate chair positions. If the subcommittees do not appoint these positions they may be appointed by the Chair or Co-Chairs with recommendation from the Committee.

5.1 The Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of nine or ten members who are members of the Seattle Branch and members in good standing:

- Chair
- Co-Chair
- Immediate Past Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Safety Officer
- Basic Subcommittee Chair
- Intermediate & Advanced Subcommittee Chair
- Leadership Chair
- Equipment Manager

The Chair or Co-Chairs must be approved by the Seattle Branch chair. The Safety Officer, Basic Chair, Intermediate & Advanced Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Leadership Chair, and Equipment Manager shall be appointed by the Chair or Co-Chairs at the recommendation of the committee and subcommittees.

5.2 Term Conditions and Stipulations

Each member of the Executive Committee (elected or appointed) shall serve for a period of one (1) year, with terms coincident with The Mountaineers fiscal year.

Elected officers may serve multiple terms, but not more than two (2) consecutive terms.

In the event that a replacement cannot be found for any elected positions, except for the Chair or Co-Chairs, for any reason, the Chair or Co-Chairs may: (1) temporarily extend the term of the incumbent; or (2) appoint an interim officer for a period of up to one year, or until such time that a replacement can be found.

If a replacement cannot be found for the Chair or Co-Chairs, the Executive Committee may appoint any qualified individual until a replacement can be found.

If the incumbent does not agree to an extension then the Executive Committee may appoint any qualified individual until a replacement can be found.

5.2.1 Co-Chair Model Term Conditions

Under the Co-Chair governance model, Co-Chairs are expected to serve a period of two (2) years. The term start for each chair shall be offset by one (1) calendar year.

5.3 Officer's Duties

Each member of the Executive Committee shall serve as the liaison to counterparts in other Branches, and attend meetings pertinent to the position, as well as executing any additional tasks assigned by the Chair or Co-Chairs. Each member of the Executive Committee will interact with organization staff as needed. Additionally, each officer in the Executive Committee shall perform the duties as assigned.

5.3.1 Chair

The Committee Chair shall:

- Preside at all regular Committee, Executive Committee, and special meetings.
- Appoint all sub-committee Chairs.
- Be an ex-officio member of all sub-committees except the Nominating sub-committee.
- Be the spokesperson for the Committee.

5.3.2 Co-Chair

Under the Co-Chair model of governance, the two Co-Chairs shall:

- Share equally the responsibilities of the Chair with specific tasks assigned and undertaken by mutual agreement.

5.3.3 Immediate Past Chair

The Previous Chair shall:

- Act in place of the Chair or Co-Chairs in their absence.
- Advise and assist the Chair or Co-Chairs with duties of the office.
- Assist the Chair or Co-Chairs with duties of the office.
- Serve as chair of the Nominating sub-committee.

5.3.4 Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- Be the recording officer for The Committee
- Take, transcribe, archive and make available the minutes of the Committee Meetings and any executive committee meetings.

- Support Leadership Subcommittee in ensuring climbing committee roster is maintained and climb leaders are satisfying requirements outlined in club-wide standards.

5.3.5 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- Oversee the financial affairs of the Activity.
- Periodically report to the Committee on the state of the finances of the Activity.
- Assist in the preparation of the annual budget.
- Interface with the Seattle Branch Treasurer and Program Center Staff as necessary.

5.3.6 Safety Officer

The Safety Officer shall:

- Take the lead on all safety-related issues pertaining to the Activity.
- Interface with the Seattle Branch Safety Committee, the Seattle Branch Safety Officer, and the Safety Officers of other Activities, as necessary.
- Provide periodic reports to the Committee.

5.3.7 Basic Chair

The Basic Chair shall:

- Oversee the basic alpine climbing program including equivalency requests.
- Recruit, train and support presenters and assistants for courses and seminars, schedule such programs, and coordinate instructor training programs, as may be appropriate.
- Interface with Mountaineers Staff on course-related issues, as necessary.
- Provide periodic reports to the Committee.

5.3.8 Intermediate & Advanced Subcommittee Chair

The Intermediate & Advanced Subcommittee Chair shall:

- Oversee the intermediate climbing course including equivalency requests.
- Recruit, train and support presenters and assistants for courses and seminars, schedule such programs, and coordinate instructor training programs, as may be appropriate.
- Interface with Mountaineers Staff on course-related issues, as necessary.
- Provide periodic reports to the Committee.

5.3.9 Leadership Chair

The Leadership Chair shall:

- Oversee & respond to inquiries about becoming a climb leader for the branch. This includes a variety of levels of climb leadership.
- Process and approve climb leader applications with input from current climb leaders, references, mentors, participants on their previous climbs, and committee members.
- Support committee or branch wide climbing mentoring programs.
- Work with the Secretary to maintain a current climb leader roster.

5.3.10 Equipment Manager

The Equipment Manager shall:

- Maintain the inventory of gear for the committee.
- Track the lifecycle of committee equipment, replacing as needed.
- Create and manage check-in/check-out processes.
- Support course leaders with purchasing gear as needed.

5.4 Order of Succession

If the Chair or Co-Chairs are unable to attend a regular, Executive Committee or special meeting then any of the other attending Officers may chair the meeting, given the following order of succession:

- Co-Chair
- Previous Chair
- Treasurer
- Secretary

Whenever an Officer other than the Chair or Co-Chairs chairs a Committee meeting they assume the duties and authorities of the Chair for the duration of the meeting.

6. Elections

For the election of Officers, a Nominating sub-committee shall convene. The Nominating sub-committee shall consist of the Immediate Past Chair, Secretary, and two non-executive Committee members. The Immediate Past Chair shall chair the Nominating sub-committee. The Secretary shall maintain the official list of nominees for each office up for election. At the end of the nomination period, the Nominating sub-committee shall dissolve.

By July 1, the Nominating sub-committee shall nominate one or more qualified Activity members who are willing and able to serve for each position up for election at the next annual election.

Members of the Committee will elect the Officers from those nominated.

6.1 Eligibility

Any qualified activity member in good standing, willing and able to serve, may be nominated for any position by petition submitted to the Nominating sub-committee or the Secretary by August 1. The Climbing Chair or Co-Chairs must be an active leader in good standing.

6.2 Election Schedule

Elections for Officers shall be held during a September meeting, or as designated by the Chair or Co-Chairs.

7. Voting

A motion to bring business before the Committee for vote may be made by Officers or sub-committee Chairs, but not by the Committee Chair or Co-Chairs.

Any business that comes before the Committee for a vote must receive a simple majority of the eligible voting members present, including voted proxies, to be adopted. Votes concerning changes in club-wide climbing activity standards and committee budget items greater than \$5000 must be made with all executive committee members (or proxies) present and members must be given 1 week notice.

7.1 Eligibility

If you are a regular member of the Seattle climbing committee (attend at least 2 meetings a year) you are eligible to cast votes for all elected officials and any other business that comes before the committee.

Executive Committee members and the sub-committee Chairs shall be eligible to cast votes for all elected positions and any other business before the Committee. Each Executive committee member and each Committee member may cast a single vote.

The Chair or Co-Chairs shall only cast their vote in the event of a tie of all the other votes. The Chair or Co-Chairs is free to vote for any and all proxies that have been delegated to them.

7.2 Proxy

If Executive Committee members (excluding the Chair or Co-Chairs) and/or subcommittee chairs are 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 voice mail.

7.2 Remote Voting

Voting on a motion or other business before the Committee normally occurs at a meeting. This allows for a full debate of the issue at hand. In extraordinary cases voting can occur remotely using a variety of means (email, online surveys, etc).

8. Budget Signature Authority

The Treasurer shall have the authority to commit/disburse budgeted funds. All reimbursement requests must be approved by the committee Treasurer, Chair, or Co-Chairs. Budget development includes following guidance on the contribution to margin for operation of the club.

Once the budget limit has been reached then any and all additional requests must be brought before the Committee treasurer, Branch Treasurer and Program Center Accountant to ensure accountability and visibility.

9. Seattle Branch Council Liaison

The Chair or Co-Chairs may appoint a delegate to act on their behalf as a member of the Seattle Branch Council.

10. Meetings

Regular meetings of the Committee shall be held quarterly, or more frequently.

The Chair, Co-Chairs, or any two other Executive Committee members may call for a special meeting in advance of the next regularly scheduled meeting with five (5) days' notice to Committee members.

Regular meetings, a proposed agenda, and prior meeting minutes shall be announced and made available in advance.

10.1 Quorum

A quorum of Committee members must be present for a vote on any matter. Three (3) Executive Committee members, plus three (3) non-officer Committee members shall constitute a quorum for a regular meeting.

Any four (4) members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

Please reference the voting section for quorum rules with regard to votes concerning changes in branch-wide climbing standards and committee budget items.

11. Active Leaders

Climb leaders are expected to abide by The Mountaineers Code of Ethics, as well as supporting all volunteers, participants, and students to be accountable to it.

The club-wide climbing minimum standards indicate that leaders must maintain their leadership and technical skills and remain up to date in current climbing skills and techniques as taught by the Mountaineers.

In the Seattle branch, we interpret that to mean that leaders must lead a climbing-related activity (or otherwise show climbing leadership) in the last three years. Leaders who do not remain current will be moved to the role of Climb Leader Emeritus.

11.1 Removal of Leaders

A Climb Leader may be removed from the committee's Leader List for good cause, including violating the above expectations with regards to the code and/or engaging in any behavior outlined in the Mountaineers Prohibited Behavior policy.

A proposal to remove a Leader should be brought to the Committee Chair or Co-Chairs and Leadership Chair(s), who can make a recommendation based on their evaluation of the cause and the opportunities the member has been given to respond to feedback about their behavior. Should any party involved in the matter deem it necessary, this proposal must be added to the subsequent committee meeting agenda.

An anonymized summary of the recommendations from the Chair or Co-Chairs and Leadership Chair will be shared with the committee at large in the subsequent meeting agenda. Details surrounding the case may be discussed during the meeting, and a process of removal may be initiated upon a two-thirds vote of those present at that meeting, assuming that a quorum (see 10.1) is present.

If a vote for removal has occurred, the climb leader will be removed from the leader roster and a note will be sent to Member Services by the leadership chair explaining the removal (and if relevant, the process for rejoining). The leadership chair will ask for this information to be added to their member record. If the removal is related to a specific activity the leadership chair will add a participant note to that specific activity.

A leader may appeal their removal (or process by which they can rejoin the committee) by written communication to the climbing chair or Co-Chairs with the leadership chair and Seattle Branch Chair copied on the email. The group described previously will review the case and respond within 90 days.

If the proposed leader for removal is the Leadership Chair or the Climbing Chair or Co-Chairs, then the proposal for removal shall be sent to a different leader within the committee in the following order of precedence, the Immediate Past Chair, the Vice Chair, the Safety Chair, the Seattle Branch Chair.

12. Removal of Officers

No Officer shall be removed before expiration of the term of office except for good cause.

The process of removal may be initiated upon a two-thirds vote of the Committee, with the affected Officers counting only toward the quorum.

Removal may only be voted for good cause shown at a meeting called for that purpose, with notice of that purpose sent to all Committee members and to the Branch Chair.

13. Amending the Activity Charter

Amendments to this Charter may be proposed by petition of any member of the Activity or by majority vote of the Committee. A two-thirds vote of the Committee is required to enact an amendment.

Amendment History

- May 2024: Section 11 added covering Active Leader expectations and removal process.
- April 2025: Modifications made to support a co-chair governance model