

## **Guidelines for Trips Involving Collection and Disbursement of Funds**

### **AMC Worcester Chapter Leadership Committee**

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The purpose of these guidelines is to assure the Chapter's standards for volunteer leadership are upheld during the course of trips which involve the collection of participants' funds to pay for trips, and that proper liability risk management for the leader(s), participants and the Worcester Chapter is maintained.

The Worcester Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club offers single and multi-day trips to the AMC membership. Please see the AMC Worcester Chapter Leadership Requirements & Guidelines for detailed definitions of a single day and a multi-day trip.

**Leadership Qualifications:** For full details on leadership qualifications, please refer to the document titled the AMC Worcester Chapter Leadership Requirements & Guidelines. The leader must be qualified for the difficulty level of the activities associated with the trip. In the event of multi-activity trip (e.g., hike & bike weekend) the leader must assure that all individual activities are led by a leader who is qualified and approved to lead that particular activity.

**Trip Limits:** Worcester Chapter multi-day trips may not exceed four nights and must be limited to within five hundred miles of Worcester. Trips outside these limits must be lead by an approved Adventure Travel Leader and approved by the AMC Adventure Travel Committee.

**Leader Responsibilities:** The leader(s) will act as agent for all trip participants, arranging lodging, if applicable; and outdoor activities. The leader will collect from the participants all fees associated with the trip and act as Treasurer for the trip. Leader(s) should collect all fees in advance of the trip. The leader(s) will distribute any unused portion of these funds back to the participants within thirty (30) days of the completion of the trip.

The leader(s) should maintain sufficient records and be able to produce a detailed accounting of the trip revenues and expenses upon request. There must be at least one leader for every ten trip participants.

**Advance Deposits:** Leaders of trips that require advance deposits for lodging or activities are strongly encouraged to obtain these funds from the Chapter Treasury. The leader will follow the Treasurer's policy on trip deposits. A copy of the policy may be obtained from the Chapter Treasurer. All trips must be approved by the Leadership Chair prior to the issuance of funds from the Chapter Treasury. Any time that funds are borrowed from the Chapter Treasury, the leader(s) of such trips must submit a copy of their final accounting records to the Treasurer for audit and retention. This ensures complete documentation and support for all funds borrowed from the Treasury.

**Leader Compensation:** Subject to certain limitations, leaders may charge their attendance costs for the trip to the participants. Leader costs are costs incurred as part of the trip; such as lodging, meals, activities fees, and are charged equally to all participants. The leader's cost may also include administrative fees as described below. Leader costs may not include gas or restaurant meals if not included in the trip, guidebooks, gear and optional lodging (e.g. Friday night lodging for a trip that begins on Sat. AM).

**Administrative Fees:** A trip leader may either itemize completely personal expenses incurred on the behalf of the trip participants OR charge an administrative fee of no more than 1% of the total cost of the trip to cover items such as stamps, phone calls, and printing/copying.

**Non-Member Participants:** Trips are open to non-AMC members, but non-members may be charged a nominally higher rate of approximately 10% higher than the published member rate. Participants with an active AMC membership will receive the normal member rate for a trip.

**Refund Policy:** Trip leaders must establish a refund policy in case a participant cancels out of a trip. This policy is to be made known to the participants prior to their registration. Leaders should implement a refund policy such that a participant who cancels with adequate time before a trip's start date receives as full of a refund as possible. It is important to note that leaders should maintain a policy by which a cancellation at a late date will not raise the price for other participants. This burden is to be borne by the participant(s) who cancel after the "full refund" date.

**Use of Outfitters:** Trips may employ the use of outfitters such as rafting outfitters, downhill ski areas or charter boats. These outfitters should be normal operators and be properly insured.

**Trip Planning:** Trip plans with an itinerary, destination, maximum and minimum number of participants, estimated cost, and a trip announcement text are to be submitted and approved by the chairperson of corresponding activity committee. Multiple activity trips are to be approved by all appropriate committees (i.e. Skiing and Ice-climbing Weekend must be approved by both Skiing and Technical Climbing Committee Chairs). Trip listings will be approved by the appropriate Activity Committee and the Leadership Chairs so the listing can appear via the normal advertisement channels: AMC Outdoors magazine, the AMC Web site, and the Chapter's Web site. This information must be presented and published in time to adequately advertise the event. A cutoff date is to be established with both lodging providers and participants such that a trip may be canceled with minimal loss of deposit if insufficient participation occurs. Leaders are advised not to wait until the last minute to publish trips that require the collection of funds or entail a registration cutoff date.

**Participant Notification:** Leaders are to notify all participants of the specifics of the trip prior to the trip's departure date. This is often best accomplished by an electronic communication one to two weeks before the trip start date. The notification should describe the lodging and rooming situations (if applicable), required equipment, refund policy, directions and a description of the activities to be offered as part of the trip. Please provide any useful phone numbers and other contact information. Leaders may facilitate a "carpool list" to minimize the trip's impact on the environment. If the leader chooses to offer a "carpool list", proper security measures should be taken to protect the participants' personal information. Leaders will ask the participant's permission to make their contact information known to the other participants before publishing it in any pre-trip communications. For security reasons, do not offer the street addresses of participants; towns, and phone numbers, e-mail addresses are appropriate.

**Participant Screening:** Leaders are responsible for screening participants for technical skills and physical ability sufficient to complete and enjoy the trip. If special equipment is required for any activity, the leader must inform the participants at the time of screening. The expectation is that the participant should have the proper equipment. Required equipment should be communicated in any pre-trip e-mails or other correspondence.

**Sign-up Sheets:** Leaders are to have all participants sign and provide emergency contact information on the AMC Volunteer Led Activities Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risks & Release Agreement. Upon completion of the trip, send the Release Agreement to the appropriate Committee Chair for the activity.

**Have Fun!** These guidelines are designed to encourage leadership of these popular AMC offerings. They are to help the leaders be informed of the necessary elements to make their trip enjoyable for leader and participant alike. Use them to continue the Worcester Chapter's reputation for putting on memorable weekends of outdoor recreation.