



## **GMC's GUIDELINES FOR SECTION OUTINGS IN THE AGE OF COVID-19**

**Edited June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

These guidelines were created by the Section Outings Working Group (SOWG) in early June. The SOWG is made up of trip leaders, outings coordinators, and experienced section representatives who considered all aspects of section outings. This guidance is the best available at the time being, but as with all things, is likely to change in the future. In the event a re-emergence of COVID-19 cases is seen in Vermont or neighboring states, this guidance may become more restrictive or outings may be cancelled again.

There is specific guidance for the Organization, Outings Coordinator, Trip Leader and the Participant. For trip leaders and participants, we've broken the guidance into specific time frames.

1. *Planning a Trip*
2. *Before the Trip*
3. *At the Start of the Trip*
4. *During the Trip*
5. *At the End of the Trip (Not for Participants)*
6. *After the Trip*

These guidelines are prescriptive but will inevitably fail to cover some questions and answers. Without being too verbose, consider the below summary of rationale for establishing guidance.

1. Minimize the chances of including potential sources of contagion on our trips.
2. Reduce the opportunities for transmission spread on our trips.
3. Follow rules and regulations established by relevant governing bodies and maintain some semblance of consistency with GMC's other guidelines.
4. Provide consistent and simple guidance for outings leaders and participants.

### **Resources for COVID-19 Guidance**

Governor Scott's COVID-19 Response- <https://governor.vermont.gov/covid19response>

CDC Website- <https://www.cdc.gov/>

ACCD COVID-19 Recovery Resource Center- <https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19>

FPR Outdoor Recreation and COVID-19- <https://fpr.vermont.gov/recreation/outdoor-recreation-and-covid-19>

Vermont Department of Health- <https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19>

Green Mountain Club Response- <https://www.greenmountainclub.org/covid-19-response/>



## GMC's GUIDELINES FOR SECTION OUTINGS IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

### Participant

#### *Planning a Trip*

- Look for a trip that is well within your hiking ability. This is not the time to try pushing your limits and thereby take on added risk for the individual or group.
- For out-of-state participants, verify that you meet state criteria for cross-state travel (<https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19/restart/cross-state-travel>) and follow additional state guidelines. This is updated every Friday, so check it before each trip.

#### *Before the Trip*

- Sign up with the trip leader and provide contact information to be filed securely by GMC Staff for 30 days. Participant contact information will be used only in the event contact tracing is required.
- Review and **acknowledge that you have read, understood and agree to follow these participant instructions.**
- **DO NOT COME** if you or anyone in your household is not feeling well, have a fever or have been exposed to someone sick in the past week. Alert the trip leader you will not be coming.
- Bring a mask (a "buff" is not acceptable) and hand sanitizer that you can keep accessible during the hike, plus all your own usual hiking stuff (water, food, clothing, sunscreen, bug dope...)
- Drive separately and do not carpool to the trailhead or meeting location designated by the trip leader (ride sharing from a single household is OK).

#### *Start of Trip*

- Adopt an "arrive, play, leave" mentality, and minimize gathering time.
- Wear a mask as you exit your vehicle, meet the leader and other participants, hear the hike instructions and depart from the trailhead.

#### *During Trip*

- Do not share food, water, or equipment outside your own household members.
- Stay spaced out on the trail at least 6 feet apart.
- All participants should be aware of the need for hiker awareness and consideration of others. **It is respectful to put on your mask when passing others.**
  - When approaching another hiker to pass, slow down, give a friendly "Hello" and communicate with hiker the next best move for passing while preserving social distancing and the trailside vegetation.

- Step off trail when needed. In areas that don't allow for six-feet of passing, step at a 90-degree angle off the trail onto a durable surface, wait until the passer is gone, and retrace your footsteps to the trail.
- Don't pass the lead hiker and especially stop at any trail junction or place where there is any uncertainty about the route.
- Avoid sharing anything and use hand sanitizer if you must share.
- At breaks, stay spread out and avoid blocking the trail or treading on sensitive plants and soils. Avoid using shelters and picnic tables during breaks.
- Privies on the Long Trail are open and should be used when needed. Practice regular personal hygiene when using privies, sanitizing your hands before and after using the privy.
- Wear masks when practical and reasonable. This may not make sense when you are breathing hard and sweating, (especially since soggy masks aren't effective). If not wearing your mask, keep it easily accessible.

### *After Trip*

- If you show signs and symptoms of COVID-19, contact your primary care provider or health provider immediately to request further guidance.