



Northern Virginia Hiking Club (NVHC)

Guidelines, Sign-in Statement and Waiver and Release of Liability Revision 4

(September 2021)

Guidelines

- **Disclaimer:** Participation in any NVHC hikes is of course voluntary. Each Meetup hike posting will contain a requirement for the hiker to read: (1) the NVHC special COVID-19 Guidelines: (2) the standard NVHC Sign-in Sheet Statement: and (3) the COVID-19 Waiver and Release of Liability, and then write "I accept" in response to the Meetup question. Those who do not accept online prior to the hike will not be allowed on the hike.
- **Local laws:** Even though many parks and trails are open, there may be other local orders that may preclude you from joining a hike. You are responsible for knowing what regulations apply to you and abide by them.
- **Limit on Number of Attendees:** Hike limits will be set by the hike leaders taking into account local and state orders in effect. Meanwhile, please be diligent about changing your RSVP to "no" as soon as you realize that you cannot attend a hike.
- **Social distancing:** Social distancing is not required for those hikers who are fully vaccinated. To reduce the risk of infection, hikers who are not fully vaccinated must maintain at least 15 feet of separation from others when hiking and at least 6 feet when not hiking. Hike leaders may impose additional restrictions including masks, vaccination, or 15 feet separation for the hikes they lead. The Club will use the honor system regarding vaccination status.
- **Masks:** With the social distancing stated above, the Club is not requiring that hikers wear masks while hiking. However, hikers are required to bring masks and wear them when indoors and when physical distance cannot be maintained. Masks may be required due to local regulations. Hikers may of course wear a mask any time for additional safety. Some leaders may require masks to be worn even during hiking, if so it will be specified in the hike description. Make sure that you cover all coughs and sneezes. These requirements must be met.
- **Carpools:** Hike leaders may designate a location for hikers to meet and form carpools. Neither the Club nor the hike leaders are responsible for coordinating transportation to/from the trailhead. Hikers are not guaranteed to get a ride to the trailhead from the carpool location. Carpooling is organized by the participants and they participate at their own risk.
- **Dogs** will be permitted on hikes at the discretion of the hike leader.

- **Health:** You must **not** attend hikes if you
 - Have had COVID-19 within the past 21 days and have not been tested to be free of the virus;
 - Or anyone in your household had any of the following symptoms in the last 21 days: cough, shortness of breath, fever greater than 100 degrees, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell in past two weeks, vomiting, diarrhea, generally do not feel well
 - Are known to have been exposed to coronavirus within the last 21 days.
- If you are diagnosed with COVID within 21 days of going on a hike, please notify the leader immediately, so that other hikers may be alerted.
- Please refer to the [CDC guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/quarantine-isolation.html> for current and specific additional information on the requirements for your area.
- **Sign-in Sheet Options:**
 - Leaders can fill out the sign in sheet ahead of time or at the hike meeting location without any contact needed by the hiker. Hikers would not need to sign the sheet. The COVID Meetup question will still have to be answered "I accept" to go on a hike.
 - Leaders can have the hikers complete the sign in sheet at the trailhead and sign their name. If a hiker does not feel comfortable doing that, the hike leader can complete the entry for them. The COVID Meetup question will still have to be answered "I accept" to go on a hike.
 - The use of hand sanitizer is recommended.
- Hikers are required to bring mask and sanitizer to use if needed (example: give first aid).

Sign-in Sheet Statement

Hike Rating Guide: *Elevation gain* is divided by 400 and added to *linear distance*. Hike is rated D (*Easy*) if the total is less than 7; C (*Moderate*) if between 7 and 10; B (*Moderately Difficult*) if between 10 and 13; A (*Difficult*) if more than 13; A+ (*Very Difficult*) if 19 or more.

Safety Message: We recommend that you *do not hike* if you answer *no* to *any* of the following questions:

- Medical Fitness: Are you medically fit to participate in this event? Footwear: Have you proper footwear (hiking boots recommended)?
- Experience: Have you done a hike of similar difficulty in recent past (same hike rating or one lower)? Food and Water: Have you enough food and water (two quarts; more in hot weather)?
 - Clothing: Have you proper clothing, especially for cold weather (layered clothing, warm wool sweater or jacket, gloves or mittens, ear muffs, hat, rain gear, and so on)?

Liability Disclaimer: Any person participating in any Club activity, whether a member or non-member of the Club, is responsible for his or her own safety, health and welfare, and must assume, and agrees to assume all risks and liabilities related to, or resulting from, any and all Club activities. The Club, its leaders, officers and representatives are not liable for any injuries, losses, or damage to persons, children, pets, and/or other property, arising directly or consequentially out of any trips and/or activities of the Club.

COVID-19 Waiver and Release of Liability

By responding "I accept" to the Meetup question, I acknowledge:

- the contagious nature of COVID-19 and voluntarily assume the risk that I may be exposed to the novel coronavirus or become infected with COVID-19 as a result of participating in Northern Virginia Hiking Club (Club) activities and that such exposure or infection may result in personal injury, illness, permanent disability, or death;
- that the Club has put in place reasonable preventative measures to stop the spread of COVID-19;
- that participating in Club activities could increase my risk of contracting COVID-19.

I hereby release, covenant not to sue, and discharge and hold harmless the Club, its volunteer officers and hike leaders of any liability related to my participation in Club activities. This includes any claims based on the actions, omissions, or negligence of the Club, its volunteer officers and hike leaders.