

These Guidelines ("Rules") were adopted by the Contra Costa Hills Club ("Club") board of directors on March 9,2024 .

I. GENERAL

1. Membership. Membership in the Club is open to all persons who submit a Membership Application (Attachment 1) Membership Waiver and Release (Attachment 2), and pay the required annual membership fee. The Membership Application and Membership Waiver and Release forms must be completed and resubmitted each year upon payment of the annual membership fee. The membership Secretary will maintain the forms.

2. Club Activities. The Club organizes weekly hikes on Thursdays and Sundays, as well as occasional overnight outings.

3. Guests. Guests may participate in Club activities, including hikes and overnight trips at the Board's discretion and when space is available. Guests must sign and submit a Guest Waiver and Release form (Attachment 3) and also may be asked to sign a Day-of Hike Sign-in Sheet/Waiver and Release (Attachment 4) on the day of a Club event.

4. Minors. Guests under the age of 18 must sign or have their guardian sign the Permission/Waiver form (Attachment 5) before participating in any Club activity.

5. Website. All Club documents, including hike and event schedules, as well as these Guidelines, may be found on the Club website at: www.contracostahills.org, and on the Club's Yahoo Group page at : <https://groups.io/g/CCHChikers/files>.

II. HIKER GUIDELINES

1. Hike Participation. Hikers must review the hike and/or event description carefully, including proposed distance and elevation, before registering and participating in a hike. Hikers should participate only in hikes or events that they are physically capable of handling. While on a trail, hikers must stay between the hike leader and the hike sweep, if possible. If at any time a hiker must leave early or leave the group for any reason, the leader must be informed immediately. Because of possible changes to the hike schedule (illness, inclement weather, etc.) it is advisable to check the Club's website at www.contracostahills.org or the Club Yahoo Group at <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/CCHhikers/info> before leaving home.

2. Registration. Members should register for themselves and any Guests in advance of a hike by contacting the hike leader. Guest Waiver and Release forms should be delivered in person to the hike leader.

3. Meet-up. Hikers should be at the meeting place on time. If there is rain or inclement weather, the hike leader will attempt to contact pre-registered hike participants in advance of

any cancellation. When there is questionable weather, hikers should check the Club website or the Club Yahoo Group to see whether the hike will take place or whether there is a change in location.

4. What to Wear. Hikers should wear loose, comfortable clothing. Ideally, layers of protective clothing appropriate for the weather, including sweaters, windbreakers and rain gear are advisable. Light-weight boots or walking shoes with appropriate traction for rough terrain are also recommended as are socks made of wool or a synthetic material that wicks moisture (cotton socks can get wet from perspiration or hiking conditions and cause blisters to develop). Gaiters can be worn over socks when hiking in areas with high grass during tick season. Hats and bandanas are recommended for warmth and sun protection.

5. What to Bring. Hikers should carry a day-pack or fanny-pack containing the following:
- a) at least a quart of water (more on hot days or particularly long hikes)
 - b) lunch and snacks
 - c) a small first aid kit
 - d) sunscreen and bug spray, when appropriate
 - e) identification and emergency contact information
 - f) a camera/phone and/or binoculars
 - g) light-weight hiking poles to help with balance on steep or rough terrain
 - h) a large plastic trash bag (can be used as a makeshift rain poncho, provide a clean space to sit, be used to store muddy boots for the ride home, or store trash and litter picked up along the trail.)

6. Being Careful. Hikers are expected to exercise care and good judgment when participating in a hike and to not take unnecessary risks.

6 a) If two or more Hike Leaders find an attendee to have exhibited behaviors that have negatively impacted any hike, such as:

- a) An unrealistic assessment of his/her own physical abilities.
- b) The inability to follow the directions of the hike leaders and carpool drivers.
- c) Lack of cooperation in coordinating with other members to foster a successful event for everyone.
- d) ANY BEHAVIOR that jeopardized the health or safety of the individual or other members.

An Incident Report on this attendee must be brought to the attention of the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors may exclude the individual from future hikes/outings for a period of 12 months. The Board of Directors will notify the person in question of the exclusion via a signed letter with right of appeal to the Board.

7. Waiver and Release of Liability. All participants must execute a waiver and release of liability, acknowledging and accepting the risks inherent in hiking activities.

8. Dogs. Because of liability and other issues, dogs (except service dogs) are not allowed on CCHC hikes.

III. HIKE LEADER GUIDELINES

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Club Members are encouraged to organize and lead hikes and other Club activities. To that end, below are some guidelines for organizing and leading a hike:

1. Choosing a Route. Hike leaders should select a hiking route that goes with the season. In hot weather, hikes near the coast and trails that offer shade are appropriate. During rainy weather, muddy trails should be avoided. Ideally, leaders should have an alternative hike in mind in case the trail or weather is unexpectedly problematic.

2. Scouting in Advance. A hike should always be scouted a week or so in advance. Sometimes there are trail closures, flooded paths, or the trail is overgrown with poison oak, etc. On rare occasions, a foot race or another hiking group could be scheduled to be on the same route. Investigating the trail route in advance will help avoid day-of-hike issues. Leaders may borrow the Club's GPS device to verify the accuracy of hike mileage and elevation gain.

3. Creating a Hike Description. When writing up a hike description, the leader should make it short and include the approximate mileage, elevation, level of difficulty, expected conditions, start time, meeting place and estimated duration. It is also helpful to indicate whether poles are advised or if there will be an option to buy lunch. In the description, the leader should request RSVPs from riders and drivers so that carpools can be arranged. Occasionally, hikers may incur incidental expenses such as parking or entrance fees or bus fares. These types of expected fees should be included in the hike description. Once the description is complete, it should be submitted to the Thursday or Sunday hike scheduler. Descriptions are due on January 31, April 30, July 31, and October 31.

4. Day-of Hike Leader Instructions.

Hike leaders and/or co-leaders must be available by telephone the morning of the hike. The cell phone numbers provided in the hike description must be valid and calls must be answered.

a. Meeting up. Leaders should be at the designated meeting location in advance of the scheduled meet up time.

b. Using Cell Phones. Leaders should have a cell phone on them at all times in case hike participants need to contact them for any reason. If the leader does not have a cell phone, a contact person should be assigned.

c. Filling out Forms. A supply of Guest Waiver and Release forms (Attachment 3) and Membership Waiver and Release forms (Attachment 2) should be available for those who have not completed them. Every participant must have signed the appropriate forms before participating in a hike. Incident Report forms are available to hike leaders on the website.

d. Circling Up. When all hike participants are present they should “circle up,” introduce themselves, and count off so that the number of hikers and identity of each can be recorded.

e. Appointing a Hike Sweep. If not already done, the leader should appoint a participant (preferably someone familiar with the trail/route) as the rear leader or “sweep.” This person must stay at the rear of the hike to help ensure that hikers do not get left behind or take a wrong turn. The leader should periodically check to make sure the sweep is in sight or within earshot. If this is not possible because of the terrain, leaders should have hikers regroup at regular intervals.

f. Setting the Pace. The leader sets the pace for the hike. No hike participants should be in front of the leader and no one should be behind the sweep.

g. Resting/Taking Breaks. Rest breaks should be called whenever a steep elevation gain has been covered so that hikers can regain their resting heart rate, take a drink of water, shed or add a layer of clothing, etc.

h. Having Lunch. Leaders should choose a suitable spot along the route to break for lunch. Ideally, this will be shady, level spot or a place with picnic tables and restrooms. Realistically, a halt may need to be called sometime around noon right on the trail to make the best of the surroundings.

i. Handling Rainy Day Changes. If a hike must be cancelled due to rain, the leader is responsible for getting in touch with all registered hike participants as soon as possible. If the leader cannot get in touch with all participants to advise of the cancellation, and the hike write up did not include “rain cancels,” the leader must be at the meeting place at the meeting time to meet any hikers who arrive.

j. Collecting Money for Incidental Expenses. Occasionally a hike may require certain reservations and payment in advance, such as hikes that include theater performances, docent-led tours of museums or historical sites, bus fares, or special transportation. When planning a hike that will include these types of incidental expenses, leaders may do either of the following:

1) make necessary reservations with the provider and pay the incidental expenses directly. The leader must then calculate a per-hiker charge and include that information in the hike description. The leader will then be responsible for collecting the charge from each participant on the day of the hike. In the event the amount collected from the hikers exceeds the leader’s out-of-pocket expenses, the excess funds must be donated to the Club’s general or conservation fund. Any shortfall in funds received will be borne by the leader;

OR

2) present a proposal to the Club Board outlining the hike description, the purpose of the incidental expense, the amount of the expense and the expected charge structure (e.g., flat fee or per person charge), the expected per-hiker reimbursement charge and payment and cancellation arrangements. If the Board approves the proposal, the hike may be scheduled after written approval by the president of the Club. The leader is responsible for ensuring hike participants issue their payments to the Club in advance of the hike with sufficient time to allow the payments to be deposited so that the Club can issue timely payment to the provider. Any shortfall in funds received will be borne by the Club and any excess funds received will be donated to the Club’s general or conservation fund.

5. Hike Leader Discretion. The leader may exclude a member or guest from participating in a hike if the leader reasonably believes that the member or guest is not physically capable of safely participating in the hike, or that the member or guest’s participation may put other hikers at risk.

IV. OVERNIGHT OUTINGS

1. Overnight Trips. Occasionally, the Club’s Outings Committee will organize an overnight trip, which will be announced in advance on the web site and via groups.io.

2. Members Only. Overnight trips are available only to Club members who have paid their dues for the 12 months prior to the opening sign-up date. Guests may attend at the discretion of the Club board of directors if there is space available.

3. Sign-up Process / Lottery.

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- a) Sign-up Announcement. The announcement of the overnight trip will identify a minimum 2 week sign-up window.
- b) Priority Selection. If there are more members signed up for an overnight trip than there are available spaces, priority selection will be given to members who have attended 18 or more hikes during the 12-month period before the opening sign-up date OR who meet at least two of the following criteria:
 - 1) Serve on the Club board of directors
 - 2) Serve as Extracurricular editor or printer
 - 3) Serve as the Sunday or Thursday hike leader or coordinator
 - 4) Lead/Co-Lead an overnight trip
 - 5) Serve on a Club committee
 - 6) Serve as the hike attendance manager
 - 7) Contribute a published hike article
 - 8) Serve as a hiking schedule editor
- c) Lottery. If there are more Members who qualify for priority selection signed up for an overnight trip than there are available spaces, a lottery will be used to determine how the remaining spaces are assigned.
- d) Waiting Lists. Those Members who qualify for priority selection, but who do not receive a space in the overnight trip will be placed on a “priority waiting list.” Members who do not qualify for priority selection, but who signed up on time for the trip will be placed on a “secondary waiting list.” If spaces for the trip open up, a lottery drawing will be held first among the priority waiting list to fill the spot, and then among the secondary waiting list, until either all spaces are filled or both waiting lists are empty.
- e) Reservations. Members who are selected via the lottery system will be provided with instructions on how to reserve their spot and request a roommate from the list, if desired. If a selected Member does not reserve his or her space by the deadline provided, the space will be offered to another Member following the lottery process.

4. Waivers. Participants must execute an Outings Waiver and Release and provide emergency contact information (Attachment 6).

V. TRANSPORTATION

The Club is not responsible for arranging transportation to or from a hike or other Club activity. Members may voluntarily agree to drive and carpool to Club activities. Any Member or Guest who voluntarily drives other participants to Club activities must have a valid driver’s license and insurance, however, the Club does not verify this information.

President, Contra Costa Hills Club

Secretary, Contra Costa Hills Club

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Date

- Attachment 1 – Membership Application
- Attachment 2 – Membership Waiver and Release
- Attachment 3 – Guest Waiver and Release
- Attachment 4 – Day-of Hike Sign-in Sheet/Waiver and Release
- Attachment 5 – Minor Permission/Waiver
- Attachment 6 – Outings Waiver and Release

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