

Responsible Hiking Guidelines
Effective June 1, 2020
(Updated June 7, 2020 and July 8, 2020)

In response to the coronavirus (Covid-19), Ohio Governor DeWine declared a state of emergency and imposed certain restrictions on activities in the state, including gathering size and social proximity. Until all restrictions on gathering size and proximity are lifted, hike leaders and hikers are responsible to hike in compliance with these guidelines.

- 1) Break up groups that exceed the gathering size limit (10 hikers). If more than 10 hikers attend a hike, the scheduled hike leader shall divide that group into two (or more) smaller groups at circle-up. If 10 or fewer hikers attend a hike, the scheduled hike leader has the option of dividing the group into a smaller group(s) at circle-up.
 - a) After the scheduled hike leader divides members into smaller groups, he or she shall appoint a second (or third) leader for each smaller group. Hike leaders may want to plan for group division and appointing an additional leader *in advance of the hike*.
 - b) Before the hike begins, the scheduled hike leader should either collect cards from each group, or make a list of the members in each group for reporting purposes.
 - c) Scheduled and appointed leaders may hike in opposite directions. Or, groups may stagger their departure, with the second (or third) group waiting 5-6 minutes to begin hiking and then following the scheduled leader's route. Each group should take care to maintain about a ¼ mile distance from the other groups.
- 2) Reporting mileage for hikes that are split into smaller groups. A *single hike report* for all groups shall be prepared by the scheduled hike leader. Use the format below.

In this example, scheduled leader Katherine Malmquist appointed Marianne Ellis to lead a group of hikers when 11 hikers arrived for her hike 7x.

June 7, 2020
7x
Miles on Hike: 5
Members on Hike: 11
Guests on Hike: 0
Hike Leader: Katherine Malmquist
Appointed Leader: Marianne Ellis

Katherine Malmquist
Marianne Ellis
Patty Abdenour
Eric Downey
Laurel Herris
Cathy King
Michele Lanza
Maureen Lindway
Joe Snyder
Nilo Valencia
Bonnie Wallis

NOTE: Reports of hikes led by a single hike leader for a group greater than the gathering size limit, 10 hikers, will be rejected. No mileage will be awarded for such a hike.

- 3) Maintain social distance. All hikers are expected to keep an appropriate social distance (6 feet) from one another at all times, including in circle-up, while hiking, and as the hike concludes. Hikers must also maintain social distance at restroom breaks, street crossings and at any other time when the group may slow down or stop. Hiker leaders may appoint a sweep to help maintain appropriate distance.

- 4) Passing other hikers. Give other hikers a wide berth when passing on the trail. Warn other hikers when approaching from behind. Pass quickly with as much space between each group as possible. When necessary, step aside in a place where you can get well out of the way of each other. Best practice: Cover your mouth with a scarf, bandana or a mask as you pass or are being passed and when a physical separation of at least six feet cannot be maintained.
- 5) Follow local park rules. Check for new or changed rules or other limits put in place for hiking in state, local and national parks, including orders regarding social distancing and face coverings. For example, some parks now require hikers to walk in one direction (i.e., clockwise) on loop trails. Some parks have closed shelters and/or rest room facilities. Respect trail closures and parking limits.
- 6) Masks. Hikers should carry a mask, bandana or scarf on the trail. For hikes scheduled in a city, county, or a park district where there is an order requiring a person to wear a face covering in public and there is no applicable exception, we are expected to comply with such orders. Check the order in question for specifics. In the absence of an order requiring a mask while hiking, hikers may choose whether to wear a mask. It is recommended that hikers considered high-risk for contracting Covid-19 and those hiking with them consider wearing a mask.
- 7) Stay home when ill. Hike leaders or hikers who exhibit symptoms of the Covid-19 virus or other contagious illnesses, like the seasonal flu or the common cold, should not join us on a hike. Please stay home.
- 8) Greetings. Please avoid shaking hands, hugging or other physical contact when greeting others.
- 9) Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your arm. Throw any used tissue in the trash.
- 10) Use appropriate hand hygiene. Carry hand sanitizer in your car or on hikes.