

**Responsible Hiking Guidelines**  
Effective June 1, 2020 (Updated June 2, 2021)

Ohio Governor DeWine declared a state of emergency and imposed certain restrictions on activities in response to the coronavirus (COVID-19). Nearly all these restrictions have been eliminated as of June 2, 2021. Yet, many members have indicated that certain practices adopted by the CHC during the state of emergency have been helpful for hikers and wish them to continue. These practices are:

- 1) Hiking Groups. For scheduled hikes where the number of individuals hikers is greater than 10-15 persons, the scheduled hike leader is encouraged to divide the group into two (or more) smaller groups at circle-up.
  - a) After the scheduled hike leader divides members into smaller groups, he or she should appoint an additional leader for each smaller group.
  - b) Before the hike begins, the scheduled hike leader may collect cards from all hikers or make a list of the hikers in each group for reporting purposes. The hike leader should report the hike in the usual format for a single hike.
  - c) Scheduled and appointed leaders may hike in opposite directions. Or, groups may stagger their departure, with the additional group(s) waiting a few minutes to begin hiking and then following the scheduled leader's route.
  - d) Hiker leaders should not inquire about the vaccination status of members or visitors.
- 2) Maintain social distance. Hikers are expected to keep an appropriate social distance.
- 3) Masks. Hikers and hike leaders are expected to comply with the current CDC Guidelines and/or state or local mask requirements, if any.
- 4) Follow park rules. Be mindful of new or changed rules or restrictions on hiking in state, local, and national parks. Respect trail closures and parking limits.
- 6) Stay home when ill. If you have symptoms of contagious illnesses, like the COVID-19, seasonal flu, or the common cold, please stay home.
- 7) Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or your arm. Throw any used tissue in the trash.
- 8) Use appropriate hand hygiene. Carry hand sanitizer in your car or on hikes.