

AMC's Volunteer led Activities Next Phase of Reopening Frequently Asked Questions – October 2021



This list of questions is grouped into the following subcategories:

- Quick Reference Guide (Blue)
- General COVID Guidance (Orange)
- Event and Participant Management (Green)
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Quick Reference Guide

AMC's guidance and requirements will continue to evolve as pandemic conditions changes.

Read all Volunteer Newsletters and Alerts!

This is how we notify volunteers of changes in policy and expectations.

AMC follows CDC and monitors trends and other data at [COVIDActNow](#).

Vaccination Requirement for Volunteers: Starting on December 1, 2021, all volunteers must be fully vaccinated as defined by CDC as a condition of volunteering for AMC.

Exemptions: AMC wants volunteers to be vaccinated and we understand that medical or religious exemptions must be considered. Volunteers to whom medical or religious exemptions apply must receive a negative PCR test result within 72 hours of the start of their volunteer activity.

Implementation. AMC will rely on the honor system for compliance. If any volunteer Leader fails to meet these requirements, the activity they are leading is no longer an official Activity as defined by AMC's [Leadership Requirements & Guidelines](#) resulting in the loss of coverage by the AMC's general liability insurance policy.

Participant Requirements. Volunteers who lead partial and full day events, work parties, trips, meetings, outdoor overnights, etc. may require participants to provide proof of vaccination status or proof of a negative PCR test within 72 hours of the start of the event. Such requests must apply to all participants without exception. See 'Event and Participant Management' below for more details.

Volunteers at Huts and Lodges, Visitor Centers, Volunteer led Camps and Cabins (VCCs) will follow the guidance and requirements established for working with guests and should be aware that visitors and overnight guests must meet expectations as defined at <https://www.outdoors.org/policies-covid/>. Individual volunteers may not screen guests and visitors for vaccination or testing status.

Adventure Travel volunteers and participants are required to follow COVID related screening expectations which can vary depending on location and activity.

Leaders may limit group size and require the use of masks. A best practice is to communicate these expectations to participants in the Activities Database trip listing.

Volunteers may not post events stating that vaccination or testing are not a requirement.

Leaders must follow expectations for using the paper waiver: ensure it is legible; submit the form within 7 days of completion of the event by following the instructions on the bottom of the form.

For your personal safety, you should expect to be in the presence of vaccinated and unvaccinated people in all AMC settings and should make choices about participating accordingly.

Have More Questions? Leadership@outdoors.org

General COVID Guidance

When does the Next Phase of COVID Reopening Begin?

Volunteer vaccination requirements must be met by **December 1, 2021**.

Participant Screening based on COVID 19 vaccination status can begin on **November 1, 2021**.

Where can I keep track of the most up to date guidance for vaccination information, group size limits, hygiene, social distancing, etc.?

AMC will align with recommendations and guidance provided by the CDC, states, tribal territories and land managers. Leaders should check for changes as part of trip planning and preparation. **Read all Volunteer Newsletters and Alerts** and monitor <https://www.outdoors.org/policies-covid/>.

Can I include children under the age of 12 on my trips and events even though they are not eligible for vaccination? Yes. Leaders should set expectations about wearing masks and social distancing especially when those events are designed for the benefit of families. Follow [CDC safety guidance](#).

What happens if I do not follow AMC's COVID Requirements and Guidelines? When any volunteer fails to meet these requirements, the activity is no longer an official Activity as defined by [AMC's Leadership Requirements & Guidelines](#) resulting in the loss of coverage by the AMC's general liability insurance policy. *NOTE: AMC puts tremendous trust in and responsibility on our volunteer leaders and will take all reasonable steps to protect leaders should litigation arise. Wherever there is a good faith effort to follow established policies and procedures, we will make a good faith effort to protect that volunteer from litigation. In cases where there is no evidence of a good faith effort to follow policies and procedures, the outcomes could be different.*

Event and Participant Management – Partial and Full Day Events, Trips, Work Parties, Meetings

Can Volunteer leaders screen participants for vaccination status? Yes. See below.

How can Volunteer leaders screen participants for vaccination? Leaders can follow one of the three methods listed below. **Whatever screening method a Leader chooses must be applied to every participant for each trip that is posted. No Exceptions.** You must ask each participant for each trip, regardless of whether or not they have previously communicated this information to you. This avoids the perception that we are applying the standard according to personal preferences or relationships.

- 1. Follow the Honor System;** *for example, the Leader may simply trust that all participants on their trip are vaccinated or have a negative PCR test within 72 hours of the event.*
NOTE: Volunteers may not post events stating that vaccination is not a requirement or expectation for attendance.
- 2. Ask participants about their vaccination status or ask that they affirm they have had a negative PCR test within 72 hours of the event;** *for example, the Leader may ask every participant to submit an email affirming their vaccination status or that they have received a negative PCR test within 72 hours of the event.*
- 3. Require proof of vaccination status or a negative PCR test;** *for example, a Leader may indicate as a condition of attendance and participation that every individual must present a copy or image of their vaccination record for COVID 19 or proof that they have received a negative PCR test within 72 hours of the start of the event.*

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Can a Leader refuse to confirm a participant on an event if the participant does not follow the guidance? Yes. Leaders can inform a participant that they are not confirmed for an event by sending a message like this:

Dear Participant, AMC prioritizes safety of its leaders and participants in all aspects of our activities. You have not met the vaccination or testing requirements to be included on this event, and therefore you are not confirmed. In making this decision, I am following AMC's expectations that participants take steps to protect volunteers and the community from the spread of COVID. If you have questions, you can refer them to Leadership@outdoors.org.

Can Leaders require other COVID safety measures? Yes. Leaders should follow all CDC recommended safety measures including masking at all times while sharing transportation, masking while in high transmission areas, social distancing, managing group size, and masking when around children. Leaders should follow [CDC safety guidance for children](#).

How will participants know about these expectations? AMC has added a COVID 19 Announcement to each trip listing posted by camp or chapter volunteers.

Can Leaders offer events without requiring participants to sign up in advance or requiring advance signing of the release agreement? Some chapters call these events "Show and Go".

Yes. Leaders can post events with information about where and when to meet, and have participants sign the release agreement in person before the start of the event. Leaders should check the legibility of names and emergency contact information on the release agreement before beginning the event.

Do Leaders and Co Leaders need to sign the Release Agreement?

While not required, it is a best practice for Leaders and Co Leaders to sign the release agreement so that their emergency contact is known in case they are the ones who are injured.

Can we resume in person events such as meetings and trainings?

Yes. Leaders must stay aware of local restrictions on indoor group sizes and any other COVID requirements and should share those expectations in advance. Volunteers are encouraged to continue to offer some meetings and training elements online to support inclusive engagement.

Can volunteers organize potlucks and other meals in group settings?

Yes. Follow best practices for food safety and hygiene and communicate expectations in advance to the best of your ability.

If I use the online registration tool to register participants in advance, can I also have participants sign the paper waiver at the start of the event if they did not register online in advance?

As a back-up plan, Yes. Best practice is to have all signatures on one version of the release. All Leaders must meet the expectations for the use of the paper waiver including ensuring that the contents are legible and submitting the waiver within 7 days of the completion of the event. Follow instructions at the bottom of the form.

How shall we report incidents on our events, including issues with participants and near misses?

In addition to completing the [Patient Care Form](#) for accidents and injuries, Leaders should complete the [Incident Report Form](#). The AMC expects that accidents, incidents, and near misses will occur on AMC trips. When in doubt, complete and submit the form. More data means more learning and greater opportunities to improve the experience of volunteer Leaders, develop training, create supportive structures, and improve follow up. [Guidance about its Use](#)

Registration Options and Waivers

How can I continue to use the Electronic Waiver in Activities Database (ActDB)?

The online waiver is available when the Leader selects the ActDB Registration Option "Required – Electronic Waiver"

How does the electronic waiver help me manage my event?

1. Allows participant to include the name(s) of minor(s) in their company.
2. Allows Leaders to make use of the built-in communication and registration tools.
3. No Submission Action Required. These forms are submitted automatically at the conclusion of the event.
4. Leaders may be asked to verify who showed up for the event.

What are the options I have when I want to use the Paper Waiver?

Available when Contributors select one of the following Registration Options: Required – Contact Registrar; Not Required; or Required – External Link.

Are there new expectations associated with the reintroduction of the Paper Waiver?

Yes. To support continued access to the paper waiver, Leaders must follow requirements and guidelines for their use and submission. [Training reference documents have been created](#). In short, Leaders need to ensure that the forms are legible and that they are submitted within 7 days of completing the activity. With the assistance of Chapter Leadership, we will monitor the rate of return on paper waivers.

Is there a required timeframe defined for returning the paper waiver?

Leaders must submit completed forms within 7 days of the end of the activity

How will I know how to submit the paper waiver?

Follow the instructions at the bottom of the form.

Can't you just add the instructions right here?

Sure. Choose one of these submission options:

Email to: AMCwaiver@outdoors.org

1. Only include waivers for one trip in each email. Do not combine waivers from multiple trips into the same pdf or email.
2. Required Subject Line Details: Leader Last Name Chapter or Camp Name Month and Year
3. Example: LNAME Worcester MARCH 2021

Mail to:

AMC Volunteer Release Agreement
ATTN: Volunteer Relations
10 City Square, Suite 2
Boston, MA 02109