

GREEN VALLEY RECREATION HIKING CLUB POLICY MANUAL

This document describes policies that reflect the wishes and needs of the Green Valley Recreation Hiking Club (“Club”) Membership and Green Valley Recreation, Inc. (“GVR”). The desire is to foster the Club’s dedication to **safe and enjoyable hiking** while pursuing activities that promote the fulfillment of our responsibilities to the environment and agencies that care for the land. We endeavor to respect and care for the environment and its inhabitants and to be the best of neighbors. The following policies are formulated to accomplish these goals.

The Club abides by all GVR policies, procedures, and code of conduct.

ORIENTATION

To encourage safe, responsible, and enjoyable hikes, all prospective Club members must attend an Orientation Meeting held under the auspices of the Club’s Board of Directors (“Board”) Orientation Chair before taking their first Club hike. The Orientation Meeting educates prospective members to the joys and hazards of hiking in the desert and emphasizes the clothing and equipment requirements. They are informed that their first hike must be a C-rated hike and that their second hike may be either a C- or a B-rated hike. Once their membership dues are paid, their third hike may be an A-rated hike.

MEMBERSHIP DEFINITIONS

A **new member** is someone who has never been a Club member. A person who becomes a new member has two benefits that may be used only once. First, that person may hike twice without joining the Club and paying dues. Second, that person may join the Club in September, October, November, or December and receive membership privileges through the following calendar year.

A **continuing member** is someone who applies for an annual membership and was a member of the Club in the preceding year.

A **returning member** is someone who applies for an annual membership and was a member of the Club sometime before the preceding year. A returning member, regardless of length of absence, is not entitled to new member benefits. Attendance at Orientation is not required if a returning member rejoins the Club within three years of last being a member.

ANNUAL DUES

The Board has established an annual dues system to finance Club expenses. These dues may vary based upon the forecasted expenses for the year. The dues are assessed for the calendar year and are not prorated for a partial year. Dues for each calendar year may be collected starting in November of the preceding year.

When new members join the Club in September, October, November, or December, they may hike in those months by paying the full amount of the next year's dues. If new members join during any other month, they must pay the full year's dues. Continuing members are in arrears for dues if not paid before their first hike each calendar year. Returning members are in arrears for dues if not paid before their first hike upon returning.

A member may be denied participation in a Club hike if dues are in arrears.

CASH RESERVE POLICY

The policy of the Club will be that as of year-end, the Club's funds would not be less than 150% of the average of the prior 2 years' annual operating expenses. Funds in excess of this amount could be budgeted for special projects as recommended by membership and approved by the Board. Such special projects would normally be a onetime expenditure and not be includable in the average operating expenses for future calculations. If there is a shortage in this year-end calculation the Board will look to fee increases or mandatory reductions in historical spending.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All hikers on Club hikes must adhere to the GVR Code of Conduct and Club policies, rules and procedures. All hikers are required to conduct themselves in a manner that promotes safe, responsible, and enjoyable recreation for all participants on the hike. The Hikemaster, Assistant Hikemaster, and Hike Leaders are authorized to enforce all Club policies, rules, and procedures.

PARTICIPATION IN CLUB HIKES AND FUNCTIONS

Club members are eligible to participate in Club hikes and other functions and to sponsor guests subject to the following rules: (1) every hiker must register for each hike on the GVR-sanctioned sign-up sheet; (2) the Hikemaster, Assistant Hikemaster, or Hike Leader may deny participation in a specific hike to anyone deemed not suitably prepared, experienced or equipped to hike or who has not adhered to the Club's established policies, rules, and procedures, the GVR Code of Conduct, or the Club's Code of Conduct; (3) participation in a hike may be denied if the member has not paid the annual dues.

NUMBER OF HIKERS ON A CLUB HIKE

The maximum number of hikers on any Club hike is limited to 24 people with the following exceptions: (1) where a government entity limits a hike to fewer than 24 people, the Club limits the hike to the maximum allowable number; (2) the Hikemaster may set limits lower than 24 people on specific hikes; (3) the number of hikers on a hike may exceed 24 at the discretion of the Hikemaster and with the concurrence of the Hike Leader and Assistant Hike Leader.

The Hikemaster may also add a hike with a new Hike Leader and Assistant Hike Leader.

GUESTS HIKING WITH THE CLUB

All guests must register for a Club hike on the GVR-sanctioned sign-up sheet and print “guest of (name of their sponsor)” in the GVR number space after their name. The sponsoring Club member must accompany the guest on the hike. Guests are not required to attend orientation before going on a hike.

The Hikemaster, Assistant Hikemaster, or Hike Leader may deny guest participation in a specific Club hike to anyone deemed not suitably prepared, experienced or equipped to hike or who has not adhered to Club’s established policies, rules, and procedures, the GVR Code of Conduct, or the Club Code of Conduct. The Hikemaster may temporarily suspend guest participation on hikes in the best interest of the health and safety of Club members. Guests must meet the guidelines of GVR. Should the guest(s) be unable to complete the Club hike, the sponsoring Club member must accompany the guest(s) in whatever alternate action the Hike Leader chooses.

Green Valley residents with Tenant GVR cards are considered GVR members, not guests, and must attend orientation before going on a Club hike.

HIKING FOOTWEAR

In the interest of safety, all GVR members and their guests who participate in a Club hike shall wear, as standard footwear, hiking boots that provide traction for all terrain in various weather conditions. To reduce the likelihood of twisting an ankle, it is strongly recommended that the boots cover and support the ankles.

HIKING PERMITS

Hikers must have in their possession the applicable valid permit if it is required for a Club hike in which they wish to participate. This may include:

US Forest Service Recreation Pass: This pass is required for Club hikes in certain federal recreation areas. Information on how to obtain a pass is available on the U.S. Forest Service website and at some National Forest Ranger Stations.

Arizona State Land Recreational Use Permit (SLP): The SLP is required for any Club hike on or passing through Arizona State Trust Land. A link to the permit application is available on the Club website www.gvrhc.org.

West Desert Trails: This permit is required for hikes on private property owned by Freeport-McMoRan Sierrita Inc. The free permit is obtained at www.wdtrails.com.

It is the responsibility of the Hike Leader to confirm that all hikers on a hike requiring a permit have one in their possession.

TRANSPORTATION TO THE TRAILHEAD AND PARKING LOT COURTESIES

Hikers are responsible for obtaining a ride to the trailhead. The Hike Leader may consolidate the rides in an effort to reduce the number of cars at the trailhead.

The Hikemaster shall determine and publish in Hike Schedules, the amount of ride share fees to be paid by hikers to the volunteer drivers. The intent of the Club in establishing such ride share fees is that transportation to and from trailheads shall be “shared-expense carpool arrangements”, and the ride share fees established by the Club are intended to reimburse volunteer drivers only for their estimated actual expenses for providing shared transportation.

In concert with GVR, the Board selects a parking lot to assemble the hikers for the purpose of signing up for the hikes and may also select a nearby lot, if necessary, to park the vehicles of hikers who are not driving to the trailhead. The purpose of this policy is to extend the courtesy of keeping parking lots open for people going to nearby functions and to enhance the efficiencies involved when considering short-term, high-turnover parking versus long-term, all-day parking.

CRITICAL INCIDENT REPORTING

The following procedure should be followed when a hiker is injured on a sanctioned Club hike and requires medical attention or evaluation via Urgent Care or Emergency Room:

1. The Leader reports the nature of the incident to the Hikemaster as soon as possible and then follows up with the hiker to determine his/her status.
2. The Hikemaster informs the Club President and follows up with the hiker several days later seeking input on his/her wellbeing.
3. The Hikemaster prepares a written summary of the incident information obtained from the leader and hiker, including updated information on the hiker’s treatment, recovery, and any recommendations for handling future incidents.
4. This written report is filed electronically in Box.com > Hikemaster > Correspondence folder and kept for three (3) years.

CANCELLATION OF HIKES

The Hikemaster or designee has the responsibility and authority to cancel any or all hikes if the weather or other conditions make it advisable to do so. Once the hike is underway, the Hike Leader has the responsibility and authority to modify or terminate the hike to ensure the safety of the hike.

HIKE CREDIT AND AWARDS

A credit of seven (7) miles for each completed Club hike is placed in the hiker’s record for the purpose of calculating entitlement to patch awards.

Credit is given only for hikes taken with the Club on a regularly scheduled hike day. It is the Hikemaster's prerogative, after consulting with the Hike Leader, to award credit for partially completed hikes.

There are no credited Club hikes in the month of July.

The Hike Leader will endeavor to present the patch award to the hiker on the day of earning such award, provided the hiker's annual dues are current.

ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES OBSERVED ON HIKES

Any potentially dangerous illegal activities that are observed while participating in Club hikes are to be ignored while getting away from the area as quickly as possible, and reported to the authorities as soon as practicable. The purpose of this policy is to maintain the safety of the hikers and perform civic responsibilities.

SMOKING, ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION, FIREARMS, AND PETS

Smoking, consumption of alcoholic beverages, firearms, and pets are not allowed on any Club hike.

MINE TUNNELS AND SHAFTS

In the interest of safety, the entering of mine tunnels or shafts is prohibited on a Club hike. No encouragement is to be given for people to enter these unsafe tunnels or shafts at any other time.

WILDERNESS INHABITANTS

Snakes, animals, insects, and other wild creatures will not be harmed intentionally while hiking in their domain. Club members and their guests will respect the life we meet on our hikes.

HIKEMASTER COMMITTEE

The formation of a Hikemaster Committee and the number of committee participants is at the discretion of the Hikemaster and is typically composed of the Hikemaster, Assistant Hikemaster, and other Hike Leaders/Assistant Hike Leaders. The purpose of this committee is to assist the Hikemaster in the selection of Club hikes.

HIKE LEADERS AND ASSISTANT HIKE LEADERS

The Hikemaster appoints Hike Leaders after determining that they are suitable candidates. The Hikemaster may consult with the Assistant Hikemaster and/or Hike Leaders in Hike Leader appointments. The Hikemaster administers a training program to enable new Hike Leaders to lead hikes safely and efficiently. The Hikemaster also selects Assistant Leaders and administers their training. Assistant Leaders, commonly referred to as "Sweeps," assist Hike Leaders on hikes.

HIKE LEADER AND ASSISTANT LEADER EMERITUS

To recognize years of dedicated leadership with the Club, the Hikemaster may make the following awards:

- Hike Leader Emeritus to a retired Hike Leader who had led at least 100 Club hikes as a full-time resident of Green Valley or had led at least 50 hikes as a part-time resident of Green Valley.
- Sweep Emeritus to a retired Assistant Hike Leader who had swept at least 150 Club hikes as a full-time resident of Green Valley or had swept at least 100 hikes as a part-time resident of Green Valley.

The Hikemaster may make exceptions to this policy on a case-by-case basis, if he or she gets concurrence from at least two former Hikemasters. For example, such an exception could occur in the case of a Hike Leader or Assistant Leader who was at times both a full-time and a part-time resident of Green Valley.

GVR HIKING CLUB HALL OF FAME (HOF)

Retired Leaders and Assistant Leaders may be inducted into the HOF if they have provided extraordinary, “above and beyond” service to the GVR Hiking Club as demonstrated by multiple contributions such as:

- Served as Hikemaster;
- Led or swept a significant number of hikes;
- Developed many new hikes;
- Contributed a lot to hiking and/or the GVRHC Board;
- Was a mentor to others;
- Developed new Club initiative(s), e.g. orientation, library, website, GPS and map training, etc.;
- Taught classes, led orientation sessions, worked on trail maintenance, maintained maps and tracks for Club hikes, etc.

A documented yearly process gathers, reviews and votes on nominations.

HIKE SCHEDULES AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The Hike Schedule contains the month’s weekly schedule of hikes, Board and Hike Leader meeting dates and locations, and other Club events and news. It is available on the Club website at www.gvrhc.org. The Club Member Directory, Bylaws, Policy Manual, and other publications and information are also available on the Club website.

BOARD NOMINEES AND ANNUAL MEETING

New Board nominees are published on the Club’s website and/or in the Hike Schedule in the month preceding the Club’s Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is held in the month of March or at another time at the Board’s discretion.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOREST SERVICE

It is in the interest of the Club to maintain a close relationship with the Forest Service and “give back” to our outdoor community. The Club works with the Forest Service to maintain specific trails in the forest system and reviews other requests it may receive.

COMMERCIAL ENDORSEMENTS

The Club does not become associated with commercial organizations nor appear to give endorsements to any products.

REVISION LOG

Date	Section	Change	Rationale
Jun 2020	Number of Hikers on a Club Hike	Reduced number of hikers from '25' to '24'	Align max hike size with typical hikers-per-vehicle (e.g. 4),
Feb 2022	Hike Leader Emeritus	Changed criteria	Committee recommendation
	GVRHC Hall of Fame	Documented criteria	Committee recommendation
	Orientation, Hikemaster, dues	Slight wording changes	Clarification
	Hike Credit & Awards	Eliminated double credit	Simplify recording
	Cash Reserve	Added Cash Reserve Policy	Document what we've been doing
Feb 2023	Transportation to the Trailhead and Parking Lot Courtesies	Added paragraph concerning ride share fees and shared-expense carpool arrangements.	Insurance and Risk Management task force recommendation.
Feb 2025	Membership Definitions, Annual Dues	New members can join and hike beginning Sept. 1 st by paying dues for the following year.	Orientation begins again Sept. 1 st after the summer break.
April 2025	Critical Incident Reporting	Added this new section	GVR no longer requires reports regarding incidents off GVR property.
	Hike Leader and Assistant Leader Emeritus	Added Assistant Leaders to Emeritus status	Assistant Leaders also should be recognized for contribution.