

**APPALACHIAN MOUNTAIN CLUB VOLUNTEER-LED AMC ADVENTURE TRAVEL TRIPS**  
**ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND ASSUMPTION OF RISKS & RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

**INTRODUCTION**

**PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE DOCUMENT** (hereafter 'Document') **CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING.** All participants must sign this Document. For participants under 18 yrs. of age (hereafter sometimes 'minor' or 'child'), one or both parent/s or guardian/s (hereafter collectively 'parent/s') must also sign. In consideration of the services of the Appalachian Mountain Club, Inc., a charitable, not-for-profit corporation, organized and existing under the laws of Massachusetts, and its chapters, including all officers, directors, employees, representatives, agents, independent contractors, volunteers (including leaders and co-leaders), members and all other persons or entities associated with it (collectively referred to in this Document as 'AMC'), I (participant and parent/s of a minor participant), **acknowledge and agree as follows:**

Appalachian Mountain Club contracts with individuals or organizations that are independent contractors (not employees or agents of Appalachian Mountain Club) to conduct some of the activities participants may engage in. Although the Appalachian Mountain Club has made efforts to locate responsible contractors, it does not supervise or control these contractors and is not responsible for their conduct. Participant (and parent/s) acknowledges that they may independently investigate and assess these organizations and activities, if they choose to do so. **Further, Appalachian Mountain Club uses volunteers to assist with, and lead trips and excursions. These individuals are not paid professional guides or leaders. In all activities, all participants share in the responsibility for their own safety and the safety of the group.**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT & ASSUMPTION OF RISKS**

AMC volunteer-led AMC Adventure Travel trips can take place in the U.S. or in foreign countries. Activities (which may be scheduled or unscheduled, supervised or unsupervised, and/or occur during free or independent time) include, but are not limited to hiking, backpacking, camping, biking, backcountry or cross-country skiing, trail maintenance, mountaineering, rock and ice climbing, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, swimming, snorkeling, and transportation or travel to and from activities (referred to in this Document as 'activities' or 'these activities'). **These activities include inherent and other risks, hazards and dangers** (referred to in this Document as 'risks') **that can cause or lead to injury, damage, death or other loss to participant or others. The following includes some, but not all of those risks:**

**Risks present in an outdoor, mountainous or wilderness environment on land or water, both on and off trail.** Travel can be subject to storms, strong winds, high altitudes, avalanches, flashfloods, currents, waves, whitewater, lightning, rapidly moving rivers or other water bodies, difficult stream crossings, snow or ice, extremely hot, humid or cold weather or water, steep terrain, falling rock, stinging or disease carrying animals or insects, wild animals and other natural or man-made hazards and dangers. Hazards may not be marked and weather is unpredictable year-round.

**Risks associated with travel in the U.S. or a foreign country.** Travel can involve unique risks, such as political unrest, terrorism and warfare, contact with unusual diseases, exposure to contaminated food or water, dangerous road or travel conditions, thievery, abduction and other risks. Participants may be subject to laws and legal systems in foreign countries that do not provide the same protections as the U.S. legal system.

**Risks associated with being exposed to or infected by COVID-19 or other infectious diseases** while participating in or traveling to and from AMC Adventure Travel activities. I understand the risk of becoming exposed to or infected by COVID-19 or other infectious diseases during AMC activities may result from the actions, omissions, or negligence of myself and others, including, but not limited to, AMC volunteers, leaders, contractors, or staff. I may be asked to isolate and may be responsible for any additional expenses incurred as a result of contracting COVID-19 or other infectious disease while participating in an Adventure Travel trip, including, but not limited to, additional lodging, transportation or medical fees.

**Risks in decision making**, including, without limitation, the risk that AMC may misjudge a participant's capabilities, health or fitness level, or misjudge some aspect of instruction, medical treatment, weather, terrain, water level, or route location.

**Personal health and participation risks.** The risk that participant's mental, physical or emotional condition (disclosed or undisclosed, known or unknown) combined with participation in these activities could result in injury, damage, death or other loss.

**The risk that equipment used** in an activity may be misused, or may break, fail or malfunction.

**AMC activities may take place in remote places**, several hours or days from medical facilities, causing potential delays or difficulties with communication, transportation, evacuation and medical care. Medical facilities may be primitive, inadequate or inaccessible.

**Risks connected with cooking and camping chores.** Risks include gas explosion, scalding or other burns associated with cooking over a gas stove or open fire, and water contamination in natural water sources. All water may be contaminated and should be disinfected, filtered or boiled before use.

**Risks associated with transportation.** Travel can be on foot or by vehicle, aircraft, train, taxi, bicycle, animal, boat or other means and can be over rough and unpredictable terrain or via oceans or rivers, with wind, rain, or other adverse weather conditions.

**Risks involved in riding or dealing with animals**, including without limitation, horses, donkeys, llamas or camels. Animals are unpredictable in all circumstances, whether participants are mounting, dismounting, saddling, riding, or dealing with animals in any way. Without warning, animals can kick, bite, stomp, rear, fall down, and react to the environment, people, other animals or objects. Risks include equipment that may fail, saddles that may slip and other riders who may not control their animals.

**Risks regarding conduct**, including the potential that the participant, or other participants or third parties (e.g. general public, rescue squad, medical facility) may act carelessly or recklessly.

**Risks regarding free or independent time.** Participants will have free and unsupervised time during, before or after the start of an AMC program. This may include periods of free time, or family/participant time alone while engaged in independent travel away from the group. AMC may provide information to individuals and families regarding local recreation opportunities or areas available during free time, or, provide transportation to

ans from activity sites. Participants and parent/s of minors are exclusively responsible for their and their child/s conduct, supervision and activity choices during this independent free time. During both supervised and unsupervised activities, all participants share in the responsibility for their own safety and the safety of the group.

**Other risks** that are generally associated with instructional, educational and/or adventure activities.

**These and other risks may result in participants: falling, being struck, colliding with objects or people, experiencing vehicle or boat collision or capsizing, drowning, reacting to high altitudes, weather conditions or increased exertion, suffering gastro-intestinal complications or allergic reactions, becoming lost or disoriented, or experiencing other problems. These and other circumstances may cause hyperthermia, hypothermia, frostbite, dehydration, burns, high altitude sickness, heart or lung complications, broken bones, concussions, paralysis, mental or emotional trauma or other injury, damage, death or loss.**

**I (participant and parent(s) of a minor participant) agree:**

- To accurately complete all required forms (including the AMC application and medical forms), abide by the terms of those documents, and obey all AMC rules, regulations and policies;
- If participant has any mental, physical or emotional conditions or limitations that might affect his/her ability to participate I agree to disclose those to AMC, and represent that participant is fully capable of participating without causing harm to him/herself or others;
- AMC is, and has been available, should I have further questions about these activities and the associated risks;
- AMC cannot assure participant's safety or eliminate any of these risks. Participant takes responsibility for having appropriate skills, physical conditioning, equipment and supplies for these activities.

**Participant is voluntarily participating with knowledge of the risks. Therefore, participant (and parent/s of minors) assume and accept full responsibility for the inherent and other risks (both known and unknown) of these activities, and for any injury, damage, death or other loss suffered by participant (and parent/s of minors), resulting from those risks and/or resulting from participant's negligence or other misconduct.**

#### **RELEASE AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT**

**Please read carefully. This Release and Indemnity agreement contains a surrender of certain legal rights. Certain federal land agencies do not allow service providers to be released by their clients from liability for injuries or other losses occurring while operating under permit on those federal lands ('restricted federal lands'). Therefore, except to the extent federal rules or regulations prohibit my doing so on restricted federal lands, I (adult participant, or parent/s for themselves and for and on behalf of their participating minor child) agree as follows:**

**(1) to release and agree not to sue AMC**, with respect to any and all claims, liabilities, suits or expenses (including attorneys' fees and costs) (hereafter collectively 'claim' or 'claim/s') for any injury, damage, death or other loss in any way connected with my/my child's enrollment or participation in these activities, or use of AMC equipment, facilities or premises. **I understand I agree here to waive all claim/s I or my child may have against AMC, and agree that neither I, my child, or anyone acting on my or my child's behalf, will make a claim against AMC, as a result of any injury, damage, death or other loss suffered by me or my child;**

**(2) to defend and indemnify ('indemnify' meaning protect by reimbursement or payment) AMC** with respect to any and all claim/s brought by or on behalf of me, my child, a family member, a co-participant, or any other person for any injury, damage, death or other loss in any way connected with my/my child's enrollment or participation in these activities or use of AMC equipment, facilities or premises.

**This Release and Indemnity Agreement includes claim/s resulting from AMC's negligence (but not its gross negligence or intentional or reckless misconduct), and includes claim/s for personal injury or wrongful death (including claim/s related to emergency or medical response, assessment or treatment), property damage, breach of contract or any other claim.**

#### **CONCLUSION**

I (participant and parent/s of a minor participant) agree that the substantive laws of Massachusetts govern this Document, any dispute I have with AMC and all other aspects of my relationship with AMC, and that any mediation, suit, or other proceeding must be filed or entered into only in Massachusetts.

AMC reserves the right to remove any participant from the program who staff or leaders believe, in their discretion, presents a safety concern or medical risk, is disruptive, or acts in any manner detrimental to the program. If participant is dismissed or departs for any reason, participant (and his/her family) are responsible for all costs of early departure whether for medical reasons, dismissal, personal emergencies or otherwise. These costs include, but are not limited to medical evacuation and costs, plane, train or taxi fare, accommodations, and costs and compensation for staff accompanying participant. **This Document is intended to be interpreted and enforced to the fullest extent allowed by law. Any portion of this Document deemed unlawful or unenforceable shall not affect the remaining provisions, and those remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect.**

**Participant and parent/s of a minor participant agree: I have carefully read, understand and voluntarily sign this Document and acknowledge that it shall be effective and binding upon me, my minor children and other family members, and my heirs, executors, representatives and estate. One or both parent/s must sign below for any participating minor (those under 18 years of age).**

Participant Signature

Date

Print name here

Parent or Guardian Signature

Date

Print name here