

OUTINGS LEADER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

This certification program is designed to provide a uniform set of standards to ensure that outing leaders have the requisite skills and experience to safely and responsibly lead ADK outings. There are three levels of certification, each with a minimum set of requirements. In order to lead an outing, an outing leader must obtain the necessary certification for the outing's respective level of difficulty as provided.

The Outings Leader Certification Program will be administered by ADK staff. Outings leaders will send the Outings Leader Certification Form to ADK's Member Services Center, which will keep an updated list of authorized outing leaders and their respective level of certification.

Level 1

To be certified as a Level 1 Leader, the person must:

- Be eighteen (18) years of age or older;
- Be a current member of ADK;
- Take Sexual Harassment Prevention Training annually (proof that someone has taken this training pursuant to their employment, or as part of some other requirement is acceptable);
- Complete Leave No Trace Training, either in-person or online at: https://Int.org/courses/online_awareness_take_action_html5/
- Co-lead at least one outing with a certified outings leader or have the equivalent experience from leading a previous outing at a similar level; and
- Have knowledge of the ADK Outing and Trip Leaders' Guide that is approved by the ADK Board.

Level 2

To be certified as a Level 2 Leader, the person must:

- Complete Level 1 Certification;
- Co-lead at least 2 outings with a certified outings leader at this level or have the equivalent leadership experience from having led previous outings;
- Complete Red Cross First Aid or equivalent;
- Complete Map & Compass Fundamentals or equivalent (not necessary for paddling leaders).
- Complete ADK's Outdoor Leadership 101 or equivalent

Level 3

To be certified as a Level 3 Leader, the person must:

- Complete Level 2 Certification;
- Complete Wilderness First Aid Certification from either Red Cross or Wilderness Medical Associates (may also take this in lieu of Basic First Aid);
- Complete a Leave No Trace Trainer Course

PRE-TRIP BEST PRACTICES

PLANNING AN OUTING

- Scout out a trip before leading it; this is particularly important for Level 2 and 3 trips. As part of the scouting, leaders should: (1) note approximately how long the outing will take, to include how long it will take to any turnarounds; (2) note any potentially hazardous conditions or navigation problems on the route; (3) note any natural history and flora and fauna associated with the route. If such a trip is not scouted in advance, any description of the outing should state that it has not been previously scouted;
- Rate the trip using the attached classification table for both hiking and paddling, taking into consideration the mileage, elevation change, and terrain;
- Consider and set the appropriate group size for the outing and, in doing so, determine whether co-leaders will be needed. Leaders should not let groups get larger than they can comfortably handle. This should be evaluated in terms of the nature of the trip, the terrain, and their own experience as a leader;
- Set a minimum of 3 (4 in winter) participants for hiking and backpacking and a minimum of 3 boats for flat water and whitewater trips. ADK guidelines and DEC regulations set a maximum of 15 in Wilderness areas of the Adirondacks and Catskills. Maximum group size is 20 in Wild Forest areas, unless Temporary Revocable Permit (TRP) is submitted and approved by DEC;
- Learn the applicable private and state regulations governing individual and group activities on lands and waters to be traversed during the outing;
- Provide a description that is sufficiently detailed to help potential participants determine whether they are physically and mentally fit for the outing;
- Require participants to contact the outing leader so they can be screened in advance (see section on Screening Trip Participants); and
- Maintain a waiting list when the outing is full in the event there are any cancellations.

POSTING AN OUTING

- Publicize the outing in the chapter newsletter, ADK website, and/or on social media;
- Note the meeting time and location, to include whether it will be, for example, at a particular trailhead or boat launch;
- Note whether there will be carpooling or public transportation available, whether adequate parking is anticipated, and whether there is a fee to park;
- Note whether there is adequate parking available or if reservations are required.

OTHER INFORMATION TO COMMUNICATE

- Whether dogs are permitted on the outing (must be leashed in Eastern High Peaks);
- The type of gear required;
- How much food and water is recommended for each person;
- That no alcohol or drugs are permitted on ADK outings;
- Whether permits are required for access and/or camping.

Outings Guide implementation Level

One - 6 months to complete: Level One

LNT Awareness Workshop (online, asynchronous, 30-40 minutes)

Sexual harassment training (online, asynchronous, 30-40 minutes) (**Annual training**)

Level Two - 18 months to complete: Level Two (Level One plus...)

Outdoor Leadership 101

Map and Compass Fundamentals

Basic First Aid

Level Three - 18 months to complete: Level Three (Level Two plus...)

Wilderness First Aid

Leave No Trace Trainer

Suggested training schedule:

This spring, Education staff piloted a volunteer symposium weekend training with all needed trainings for various volunteer positions. It was highly successful.

We propose offering a weekend this fall with all of the outings guide in-house trainings offered (meaning: Map and Compass, Basic First Aid, Outdoor Leadership 101, Leave No Trace training) on **November 17-19th, 2023**. If successful, this would be offered again in the spring.

ADK staff can offer 4 additional Map and Compass Fundamentals and Outdoor Leadership 101 courses specifically for outdoor leaders. These can be offered online or in person (perhaps 2 online and 2 in-person) over the course of the year. These courses would be run at no cost to participants. If the participants are unable to sign up for these particular courses, they can sign up for the open enrollment Map and Compass and Outdoor Leadership courses that are offered frequently throughout the year (but would need to have their chapter reimburse them for the course cost.) **See this schedule here:**

<https://adk.org/skills-workshops/>

American Red Cross First Aid and CPR—there is an online training (asynchronous) that costs \$37. Chapters can budget for reimbursement to all outings leaders.

We also have an instructor at Heart Lake who can offer these courses. We would charge nothing except the \$25 cost for the certification. (American Heart Association) (We would offer 3 of these in 2024, 2 likely tied to Outings Guide training weekends.)

Wilderness First Aid:

These courses are offered regularly throughout the state and the region. Here are places to check for local trainings:

<https://adk.org/skills-workshops/>

<https://www.wildmed.com/wilderness-medicine-search-rescue-training-schedule/>

<https://wildsafe.org/courses/wilderness-medicine/wilderness-first-aid/>

If the chapter has enough demand, we can be the connection with instructors and help set it up locally.

ADK Education can offer 1-2 additional courses in 2024. (Chapter reimburse participants.)

Leave No Trace Trainer:

These courses are offered both by ADK staff and by other organizations and entities. We will offer two of these (fall and spring) as part of training weekends. We can also offer an additional trainer course if needed. We are also investigating the new online trainer course to find out if we can offer it.

Here are places to look for additional courses:

<https://lnt.org/event/?event-category=trainer-courses>

LEADER RATING SYSTEMS

HIKE LEADER RATINGS

Leader Level	Rating	Effort Level	Elevation Gain (ft.)	Miles	Time (hrs.)
3	A+	Very Strenuous	4,000	10	10
3	A	Strenuous	3,000	5 to 10	8 to 10
2	B+	Moderately Strenuous	2,000	5 to 10	6 to 8
2	B	Moderate	1,000	5 to 10	5 to 7
1	C+	Fairly Easy	1,000	5 to 8	4 to 6
1	C	Easy	Under 1,000	< 5	< 5

FLAT/MOVING WATER LEADER RATINGS

Leader Level	Miles	Portages	Water Class
1	< 6	Short (< 1/2 mile)	Flat
1	6 - 12	Long (> 1/2 mile)	Flat/moving
2	12	Long	Flat/moving
3	12+ multi-day	Various	Flat/moving

WHITEWATER LEADER RATINGS

Leader Level	Water Class	Miles	Notes
1	Class 1	< 15	
2	Class 2	< 15	Leader Level 2 will be permitted to lead trips on Sacandaga
3	Class 3 -	15	