

Hiking is back!

by Danny Bernstein



The CMC Council voted to reopen scheduled hiking - carefully - on May 29, 2020. The hiking committee worked on new hiking guidelines which were reviewed by the Council.

Hikes will be posted either under CMC breaking news - <https://www.carolinamountainclub.org> or on the [CMC Meetup website](#). The latter requires hikers to join Meetup (at no cost) and choose CMC.

Debby Jones, president of CMC, has been meeting with sister hiking clubs (on Zoom) such as [Smoky Mountains Hiking](#) Club on how to reopen hiking with new guidelines. “We’re basically using ATC guidelines,” Jones said.

The major changes are:

A maximum of ten hikers will be allowed on a hike including the leader. The leader may decide to have fewer people. You must reserve your spot on a hike. Needless to say, with a limit on hikers, you have made a commitment and must let the leader know as soon as possible if you won’t be able to attend.

We won’t be carpooling. Unless you live in the same household, you need to drive to the trailhead. If the trailhead is difficult to find, the leader may list an intermediate point that is easier to find. Then we will all caravan from there.

Everyone will have to sign the waiver. BUT bring your own pen and/or gloves when you do sign.

Hike leaders are free to impose other guidelines for their hikes. For example, some leaders will accept CMC members only and no guests.

Debby Jones’ personal opinion is that we may have to follow these guidelines until we have a vaccine for this virus.

“We’re a public facing organization. CMC is well-known in the state and we have to set the examples. I hope that we all adhere to the guidelines and not be casual about it. I don’t want to have to shut down hiking again,” Jones said.

Here are the complete guidelines. They are also posted on the CMC website.

COVID19 - CMC HIKING COMMITTEE GUIDELINES FOR HIKE LEADERS AND HIKERS

- 1) Bring hand sanitizer to use on the trail.
- 2) No sharing food and drink.
- 3) Avoid touching face.
- 4) Cover your mouth whenever coughing or sneezing using inner elbow or tissue and dispose of it using 'Leave No Trace Principles'.
- 5) Keep at least six feet distance as recommended by CDC between you and other hikers.
- 6) People at higher risk for severe illness as noted by CDC should refrain from hiking at this time.
- 7) Any hike leader or hiker who is feeling sick should refrain from hiking and congregating with others.
- 8) Hikers and hike leaders should number no more than 10. This means hike leaders will have to take reservations for any hike they are leading.
- 9) No more carpooling. Everyone should drive themselves to the trail head unless they live in the same household.
- 10) Bring face covering to use when passing other hikers or when crowding occurs.
- 11) The CMC waiver must be signed. Hikers are responsible for their own safety and can use gloves, their own pen, hand sanitizer.

The full page liability waiver has also been updated to include concerns about COVID 19.

Basically it says that hikers understand that the disease may exist among hikers. Here's the basic change:

I also understand that naturally occurring disease processes (including but not limited to, COVID 19), may exist in the community, including the forest lands and trails accessed by CMC. I agree that it is my responsibility to take appropriate actions to safeguard myself and to stay home if I have any symptoms of illness. I acknowledge that this activity involves risks, both known and unknown, that cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity. I find and accept that the activities of CMC are reasonably safe and suited for my participation, and I understand, accept and assume the risks arising from these activities. I acknowledge and agree that the CMC does not provide transportation to or from any CMC activity, and that I am personally responsible to all risk associated with travel to and from any CMC activity.