



Updated on March 18, 2020

Guidance for Managing Volunteer Events and Safety During the COVID-19 Outbreak

COVID-19 (commonly referred to as “Coronavirus”) is a highly contagious respiratory virus that has been diagnosed in the all of the states along the Appalachian Trail (A.T.). Due to the high risk of spreading this illness in group settings, the ATC has developed the following guidelines for volunteer maintenance trips and events. **The health and wellbeing of the greater A.T. community is our top priority.**

The ATC strongly recommends that A.T. clubs suspend all trail-related activities until at least April 16, 2020 to give the country time to realize the full impact of this virus. If a club feels they must continue work on the A.T. the rest of this resource provides guidance on harm-reduction protocols. ATC requests all volunteers with positions that attempt to interact with members of the public, such as volunteer ridgerunners, ambassadors, trail patrol stand down from those activities until further notice.

Before participating in any volunteer event, **we ask that anyone who feels like they are getting sick to stay home seek medical care, especially if they are experiencing any of the symptoms correlated with COVID-19:**

Common symptoms:

- + Fever
- + Dry cough
- + Shortness of breath

Severe symptoms:

- + Difficulty breathing
- + Persistent pain/pressure in chest
- + Confusion or inability to arouse
- + Bluish lips or face

Also consider if you or the any of the people you will come into contact with are at high-risk of serious illness from COVID-19 — older adults or those who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes or lung disease.

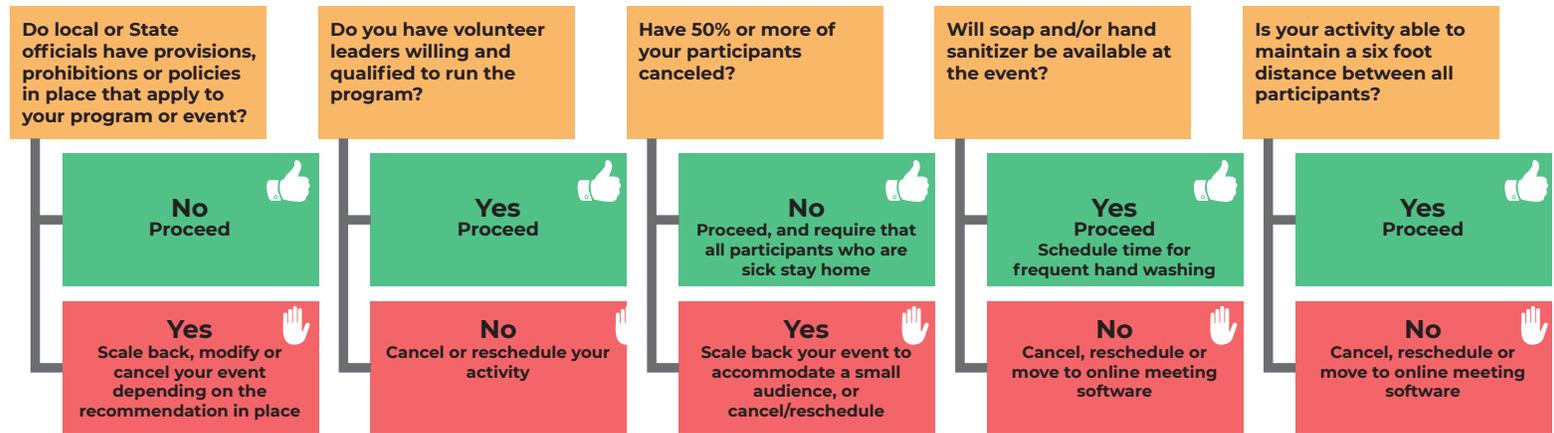
If your program or event proceeds, we propose the following guidelines during the event:

- + **Plan for smaller work parties (fewer than 10 people)**
- + **Ensure your sign-in roster is accurate for each outing.** Especially important in case you need to identify people retroactively who may have been together before a positive diagnosis.
- + **Until further notice, do not invite international volunteers to participate in any events.**
- + **Reconsider carpooling to work locations since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends social distancing to be more than six feet.** Despite environmental impacts, public health takes priority.
- + **Do not share tools and equipment.** Wash, rinse and sanitize tools, safety glasses, helmets, and other equipment at end of day. Per CDC recommendations, unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Prepare a bleach solution in a well-ventilated area by mixing: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.
- + **Ensure volunteers bring their own washable work gloves, rather than issuing loaner.** Clean after every use.
- + **Take extra steps to ensure self-sufficiency of participants to avoid sharing snacks and water bottles, etc.** Trip leaders should bring extra essentials like hand sanitizer and extra bandanas in case they are needed to cover mouth of someone who develops cough.
- + **Wash your hands regularly.** Volunteers should carry extra water to wash hands throughout the day and then apply sanitizer to clean hands. Use hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol.
- + **Advise participants on work trips that if they do become ill following the workday to notify you as trip leader so you can communicate to others who may have been in recent contact.**
- + **Cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing.** Use the crook of your arm (inner elbow) to cover your mouth when coughing or sneezing or use a tissue and dispose of it using Leave No Trace Principles.

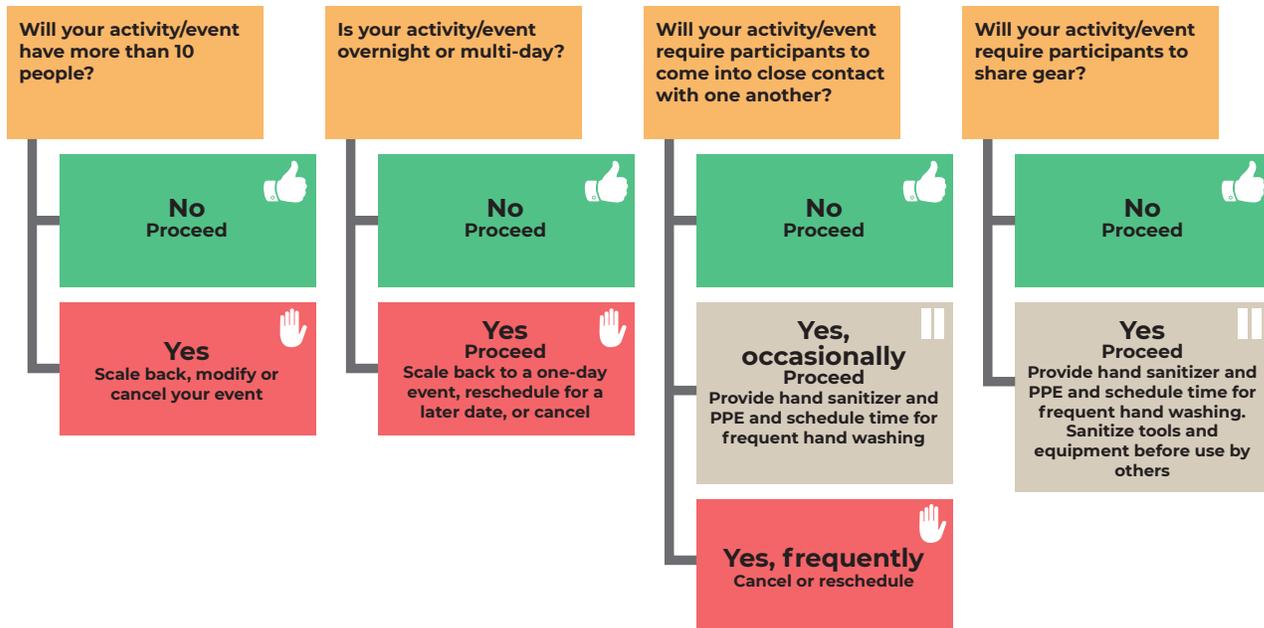
On the reverse side of this document, you will find a rubric for deciding whether to proceed with, modify, or cancel any upcoming events.

Recommendations for proceeding with, modifying or canceling events

Before continuing with any event, answer these questions first:



Answer these questions for outdoor activities



Answer these questions for indoor activities

