

TATC Activity Leaders Needed

TATC needs activity leaders to step up and lead local and multi-day activities during the week and on weekends. This article is tailored to encourage TATC members to sponsor club events.

We are looking for activity leaders to sponsor and lead the following types of events:

- Biking
- Local Hikes
- Backpacking/Camping
- Paddling
- Other Events

Please consider leading a club event. You can select an event from the linked list below or propose your own. Leading an event, especially a local event, is not as difficult as most people think; however, it requires time, dedication and determination.

Click this link: [Possible TATC Events](#)

Basic Steps:

1. Scout out and select an event
2. Provide scheduling information for the event to the hikemaster@tidewateratc.com
3. Sign up participants for the event and fill in the [Activity Sign-Up Form](#)
4. Hold the event
5. Report volunteer hours for leading the event, using the [Volunteer Leadership Form for Recreational Events and Activities](#)

Below is more detailed information on how to set up and run a successful event. Remember, if you need help in organizing your event, our experienced club members are always ready to provide guidance and support.

High-Level Activity Leader Skill Set

- Appropriate knowledge, skill, and ability to properly plan and lead the activity.
- Effective and creative communication skills to ensure all participants are prepared for the activity.
- Ability to solve unexpected problems and emergencies.
- Good time management skills.
- Technical competence for the planned activity.
- Ability to recognize strengths and weaknesses of participants and use or compensate for them accordingly

The Basics

- A. Pre-activity Planning and Organization
- B. How to get the word out
- C. If special skills or equipment are needed
- D. Running the event
 - A. At the Meeting Place
 - B. At the Starting Point
 - C. While Underway
- E. Activity Conclusion

A. Pre-activity Planning and Organization

1. Choose and scout the activity.
 - a) Determine how best to access the starting point. The starting point is the place where the activity actually begins, such as a trailhead or canoe/kayak landing.
 - b) Note the location and capacity of the nearest parking — have a plan if it appears there will not be enough parking available. Study the route and location (by personal inspection, if possible)
2. Hazards and obstructions.
3. Does group size need to be limited?
4. Rules and regulations that apply to the location and activity you will lead (e.g. forms and fees, fire restrictions, off-trail travel, etc.)
5. Availability of drinking water.
6. Availability of toilet facilities.
7. Significant landmarks and route markers.
8. The amount of time required to accomplish the activity and travel time to and from the starting and ending points.
9. Know emergency access points along the route and the phone numbers and locations of the nearest emergency services.
10. Know the jurisdiction in which your activity will take place. Points of interest. Select a lunch spot, if appropriate.
11. Overall difficulty in terms of physical condition and skill level required.
12. Identify a place to eat at the conclusion of the activity or on the way to and from an overnight activity.

B. How to get the word out

1. Provide a description of the activity to the Hikemaster and Newsletter Editor
2. The Hikemaster will list all activities on the club calendar and in the “Events” on our web page and will add it to our MeetUp group if desired
3. Description and location of the activity
4. Skills required, potential hazards, and level of difficulty

5. Names and telephone numbers of the leader and assistant leader
6. Equipment required. Include water recommendation, suggested daypack contents, and clothing, as well as any special items the individual must bring (e. g., canoe, climbing shoes, skis)
7. Meeting/carpooling place and time. If you plan to pre-screen participants, provide this information to participants only after pre-screening is complete. Otherwise, unanticipated persons may arrive at the meeting place wishing to join the activity.
8. Expected activity expenses, including entrance fees, lodging, permit costs, meals, tolls, and transportation (including driver reimbursement recommendation).
9. Explain TATC's policy on participation by minors. If minors are to be permitted on the activity, explain the guidelines to the parents or sponsor, and send them a copy of the TATC Education Handout "[TATC Guidelines for Activity Participation by Minors](#)" which is also linked at the end of this article.
10. Inclement weather plan.
11. Once you have signed up to lead an event. Send the TATC Hike Master and TATC Webmaster (hikemaster@tidewateratc.com & webmaster@tidewateratc.com) an email with the following information:

- Event Title
- Date of the event
- Time(s) of the event
- The maximum number of participants that you want for the event
- Location to meet at the start of the event
- Point of Contact (POC) Information, email and/or phone #
- Description of the event (including distance, difficulty, and equipment)
- Website if applicable
- Where you will be eating out after the event (If applicable)
- Any other information, like parking or entry fees
- Besides being listed on the TATC Website Schedule, in the Newsletter, and announced at the Membership Meetings, how else do you want your event publicized:

Meetup – Yes or No

Facebook – Yes or No. If 'Yes' then copy facebook@tidewateratc.com

Example of an Event Listing:

Event: Fort Monroe Walk/Hike

Date: September 28th, 2024

Time: 10:00 am to around 12:30 pm (for the walk/hike)

Location: We'll meet in the parking lot Northeast of Oozlefinch Brewing (81 Patch Rd, Hampton, VA 23651), near the corner of Patch and Pullman roads at 10 am, with a planned start at 10:15.

Description: This will be an approximately 4-mile, mostly flat walk through the fort, along the bulkhead from the Chamberlin up to the Paradise Beach Club, and then back to our starting point. We'll be making brief stops at many of the historical locations of the Fort Monroe tour and a planned stop about 1/4 of the way along our walk at Firehouse Coffee for caffeine/soda/ice cream, etc., for those who might want a refreshment. Late-September weather can be unpredictable, so dress accordingly and consider sunscreen. This is a family and dog-friendly event.

POC: joesmith777@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.oozlefinchbeers.com/>

Facebook - yes, MeetUp - yes

12. The Hikemaster will use this information to make sure your event is listed in the club schedules and on TATC's Meetup site if applicable

13. The Facebook Coordinator will use this information if you want your event posted on TATC's Facebook page.

C. If special skills or equipment are needed

1. For bike rides check you may want to discuss the type of bike (i.e. road vs hybrid vs mountain bikes) the person is planning on bringing and their comfort with the type of ride you are leading. Do they have a helmet (and are you requiring all rides to wear them).
2. For canoe/kayak trips, what type of craft do they have and is it appropriate for your trip? Do they have the appropriate safety equipment? Can they swim?

D. Running the event

- a) At the Meeting Place (which might not be the activity location)
 - Check who has shown up against who signed up
 - Get folks to sign-in and provide emergency contacts
 - Do a visual check on people's preparedness
 - Discuss safety and expected weather
 - Give a high-level overview of the day's events/timeline
 - Match drivers with those needing rides

- Make sure drivers know where they are going
- Get cell phone numbers of drivers or POC in each vehicle
- b) At the Starting Point
 - Re-check and account for all participants
 - If not done before, have them introduce themselves
 - Discuss how often the group will stop and re-assemble
 - Discuss Leave No Trace as it would apply to the activity
 - Establish a “sweep”
 - If in cell range, exchange phone numbers with the sweep
 - If not in cell range, consider having made in-advance arrangements to use one of TATC’s Garmin Mini’s (emergency satellite GPS messaging device)
- c) While Underway
 - Set and maintain a realistic pace for all participants.
 - Adjust as needed based on group’s needs
 - Stop and take a break after 10 or 15 minutes
 - Let folks adjust clothing
 - Ask if everyone is doing ok and ask for pacing feedback.
 - Talk about points of interest.
 - Solicit others to share their knowledge and skills
 - Ensure breaks are realistic and evenly dispersed.
 - Avoid ending the break when the last person catches up.

E. Activity Conclusion

1. Account for all participants
2. Briefly thank participants
3. Consider reminding non-members to consider joining the club!
4. If part of the plan was to eat after the event, make sure everyone knows the location and make sure everyone feels welcome to attend
5. Make sure everyone has a ride home
6. Report volunteer hours for leading the event, using the Volunteer Leadership Form for Recreational Events and Activities

TATC also has several online documents to support activity leadership:

- Activity Sign Up Form
<https://tidewateratc.com/resources/Education/activity%20sign%20up.pdf>
- Activity Sign Up Information
https://tidewateratc.com/resources/Education/activity_sign_up_info.pdf
- Leading Local Trail Activities

<https://tidewateratc.com/resources/Education/Leading%20LOCAL%20TATC%20Activities.pdf>

- Activity Leaders' Guide

https://tidewateratc.com/resources/Education/Acty_ldr_guide_2014_01_28.pdf

- Activity Leader Pocket Guide

https://tidewateratc.com/resources/Education/activity_leader_pocket_guide.pdf

- Guidelines for Participation by Minors

<https://tidewateratc.com/resources/Education/Guidelines%20for%20Participation%20by%20Minors.pdf>

- Leave No Trace Booklet

https://tatc.wildapricot.org/resources/Education/LNT_booklet_wsr_flip_2013_01_21.pdf