

# Procedures and Protocol

(Last Rev. 01/05/2023)

The purpose of the Grand Hikers is to provide its members with opportunities to hike and to promote safe hiking. To that end, please review Chapter 12 and 13 of the Hiking Club Policies and Procedures as well as this document. Please read and become familiar with its contents.

## Hike Procedures and Protocol

1. No pets, personal radios, firearms, or children under the age of 16 are permitted on a hike.
2. All hikers (including guests, visitors, and prospective members) shall sign up for club-sponsored hikes in advance. For club members this is done on the club's website at the Hikes/Hike List dropdown. Prospective members and guests must be signed up by the Hike Director, the Hike Leader or another club member. Non-members should contact the Hike Director for information on club hiking procedures.
3. All hikers (including guests, visitors, and prospective members) shall sign the online hiking club waiver prior to hiking any club-sponsored hikes. This is done on the club's website at the Members/Waiver Form dropdown (<https://form.jotform.com/203006986227052>). This is a one-time online signature after which the waiver form will be automatically submitted to the Membership Director.
4. Guests, whether visitors or prospective members, must check in with the Hike Leader prior to hiking with the group. All guests must complete a Hike Readiness Questionnaire and an Emergency Form. Guests as well as Club members must comply with Club Policies and Procedures. Each hiker is required to have hiking boots/shoes and must carry a pack with an adequate supply of water. The guest privileges set forth in the Sun City Grand Community Association Rules, Regulations and Procedures, limit Sun City Grand Residents and nonresidents to three hikes per year as guests.
5. The Hike Leader has the authority to question and refuse participation to any hiker who appears to be unprepared for the hike.
6. The Hike Leader will ask the group to "circle-up" and count off to ensure that those signed up in advance are present. For large hiking groups this will be repeated at the trailhead.
7. At the end of the hike, carpool drivers will ensure all their passengers are accounted for before leaving.
8. The Hike Leader's car will be the last to leave the trailhead after confirming that all cars are operable.
9. Hikers who have cell phones are encouraged to bring them along on the hike.
10. The summer hiking schedule offers a reduced number of hikes, normally one each week. Meetup time is early and with the goal of completing the hike before mid-morning. Generally summer hikes should be rated Easy or Moderate and not exceed five miles in length. Whenever possible summer hikes should be in-and-out as opposed to loop hikes. Exceptions may be made for hikes at higher elevations and cooler weather.

## **Club Procedures and Protocols**

1. Application and payment for club membership can be made on the club's website. Payment for annual dues by credit card is preferred. Payment by check requires additional administrative time and delays accessing member benefits.
2. Annual dues are \$15.00 for the calendar year January through December. New members will also pay \$8.00 for a hiking club name badge.
3. Announcements of non-club sponsored activities at meetings or on the website may be made only if the activities are hiking related, open to all club members, and not for personal gain.
4. Tickets for social events with limited capacity will be announced on the club's website, at membership meetings and occasionally by an email blast to all members. Online purchase with credit card is preferred for social events.

## **Environmental Stewardship and Impact**

1. Respect the environment. Stay on designated trails and avoid wet or muddy trails.
2. Don't cut switchbacks, take shortcuts, or create new trails.
3. Know agency rules and regulations and read all signs.
4. Tread lightly and leave no trace by packing out litter and avoiding muddy trails. Leave an area in as good as or better condition than you found it.
5. Leave all natural things and features as you found them for others to experience. Respect and enjoy, but NEVER disturb archaeological or historic sites.
6. Don't contaminate any stream or water pool with trash or human waste, including urine. Relieve yourself at least 100 feet from a water source.
7. Food waste such as banana and orange peel biodegrade very slowly in a desert climate and can be hazardous to animals if eaten. All food waste should be packed out.

## **Hiking Safety**

1. Participation in the activities of the hiking club can be potentially dangerous.
2. Assess your risks and take full responsibility for your safety. Sign Grand Hikers Waiver of Liability, which is included on the Grand Hikers Club Membership form and also on the top of each daily sign-up sheet.
3. Foster safe hiking practices, promote hiking safety, and alert either the club officers or the Hike Leaders of any unsafe hiking practices.
4. Keep physically fit by participating in some form of regular physical exercise. Match your physical ability to the degree of difficulty of the hike.
5. Do not attempt a hike that you suspect is beyond your endurance or level of physical capability.
6. Say something immediately if, during a hike, you experience a physical problem!
7. Do not get ahead of the Hike Leader, who will always be at the head of the column, or lag behind the sweep, who will always be at the rear of the column.

8. Do not leave a hiker alone for any reason. Always leave another hiker (equipped with a walkie-talkie) behind with a hiker who cannot complete a hike.
9. Stay with the group! Do not stray from the group or take off on your own. Do not leave the hike until the completion of the hike.
10. Wear hiking boots or hiking shoes designed specifically for hiking.

### **Sharing the Trail**

1. Keep to the right of the trail. Save the left for passing. Always announce your intentions when passing.
2. Always yield to equestrians and pack animals. Downhill hikers and joggers always yield to uphill hikers and joggers. All users (hikers, joggers, and bicyclists) must yield to saddle stock. Bicyclists must yield to hikers (but don't bet your life on it!). Listen for other trail users, and all hikers stand to one side of the trail to allow uphill users to pass (always keep safety in mind when stepping off the trail).
3. Slow down and adjust your pace when approaching other users. Travel at a speed appropriate for the trail and the weather conditions.
4. When in a group, travel single file and don't block the trail. Allow room for other users.
5. Be considerate of fellow hikers and other trail users.

### **Required Clothing and Hydration**

1. Hiking boots or hiking shoes designed specifically for hiking are mandatory if you wish to hike with the club.
2. Hikers should carry water bottles or other hydration systems easily accessible while hiking. Hikers not carrying adequate hydration (water or sports drink) will not be allowed on the hike. Each hiker should carry their own water.
3. Adequate hydration while hiking in the desert is extremely important. Dehydration is serious and can occur without advance notice. Daypacks should include exterior bottle holders or hydration reservoirs with sipping tubes to allow for easy access and regular sipping of water and/ or electrolytes without requiring stopping to remove a pack to access water.

### **Recommended Clothing and Equipment**

1. Vials of Life or other form of emergency contact information should be carried in daypacks. Hike Leaders have a supply of Vials of Life in their safety bags.
2. A hiking boot with adequate toe room, good foot and ankle support, and thick soles with good gripping power. Lug soles provide the best traction and protection from sharp rocks and cactus spines.
3. Loose fitting clothes that may be layered (e.g., layers of clothing that may be put on or taken off as weather conditions change).
4. Shorts or long pants with pockets secured with zippers or Velcro.
5. Wide-brimmed hats, a hiking stick, and a good pair of hiking socks.
6. A bandanna or scarf for protecting the back of the neck from sunburn.
7. Sunglasses and sunscreen.

8. A daypack for carrying water, snacks, camera, binoculars, and the like.
9. Moleskin or other "stick on" padding for placing on blisters or sore spots on feet.
10. A small amount of complex carbohydrate, such as fruits, crackers, nuts, trail mix, energy bars, eaten at half-hour intervals.

**Car Pooling and Driver Compensation**

1. Car-pooling is encouraged as frequently there is very little room to park at the trailhead. Hikers should take a turn driving in the carpool.
2. Each passenger in the carpool pays the driver a predetermined fee based on the mileage to the trailhead and road conditions. In addition, parking and entry fees will be paid as follows; if a pass is not available in the car, all occupants of the car will split the cost of the entrance fee/parking fee to the park. If a pass is available in the car, then that pass will be used and no entrance fee will be collected from the occupants of the car. All fees can be found in the hike description. Please try to bring exact change.

**Carpool Fee Calculation**

The "CARPOOL FEE" table below is used to determine the fee for each hiker. Mileage is measured one way from the gathering point to the trailhead. This table is based on the most recent posted IRS reimbursement rate. It assumes that the driver will be reimbursed about 66% of the estimated total expenses of vehicle operation when there is a driver and 3 riders.

The price of "regular unleaded" gas at Fry's (corner of Bell Road & Reems) on the first of each month will be used to determine the "CARPOOL FEE" for all hikes that month.

The minimum "CARPOOL FEE" is \$3.00.

The total "CARPOOL FEE" is rounded (up or down) to nearest whole dollar.

Local Gas Price (\$ per Gallon Regular Unleaded) CARPOOL FEE PER HIKER\* (cents per mile one way). This table is subject to change when the IRS reimbursement rate changes. The table below is accurate as of the 2023 IRS rate of 0.655 cents per mile. Carpool fee based on assumption of 3 riders plus driver per car.

<b>Hiking Club Carpool Rates for 2023</b>			
<b>\$/gal</b>		<b>\$/gal</b>	<b>cents/mi</b>
<b>\$1.91</b>	<b>to</b>	<b>\$2.51</b>	<b>0.18</b>
<b>\$2.52</b>	<b>to</b>	<b>\$3.12</b>	<b>0.19</b>
<b>\$3.13</b>	<b>to</b>	<b>\$3.72</b>	<b>0.20</b>
<b>\$3.73</b>	<b>to</b>	<b>\$4.33</b>	<b>0.21</b>
<b>\$4.34</b>	<b>to</b>	<b>\$4.94</b>	<b>0.22</b>
<b>\$4.95</b>	<b>to</b>	<b>\$5.54</b>	<b>0.23</b>

Gas price determined on the first of each month using the Gas Buddy app for regular gas at Fry's (Reem and Bell Rd)

\* Unpaved Road Surcharge. When the drive to the trailhead requires driving on unpaved roads, a \$2.00 per rider surcharge is added to the above fees to assist driver with the cost of a carwash.