



Arizona Trail Association

COVID-19 Epidemic Protocol Volunteer Program Summary

6/2/2020



We have created this guide for staff and volunteer leaders to review with volunteers on trail operation activities on the Arizona Trail during the time of the COVID-19 pandemic and the more extended period of “recovery” that will follow it. Many of these procedures may be in place for months or years after the most stringent restrictions have been lifted.

This document is subject to change. The ATA will conduct our trail operations only when it is deemed lawful and prudent to do so, and will cooperate in full with all applicable laws, rules and regulations, including temporary emergency orders.

COMMUNICATION

Refrain from participation in any activity on the AZT if they have symptoms of or believe they may have COVID-19.

- ☞ Read the CDC guidelines regarding underlying conditions that would put you at high risk of severe illness and determine if your participation in the activity will unduly jeopardize your safety.
- ☞ Inform the ATA if you develop symptoms (even mild ones) of COVID-19 within 14 days after an ATA activity (within 24 hours of discovery).



GROUP SIZES

One of the most important protections identified by the medical community is to reduce the number of individuals each infected person has the opportunity to spread the virus to. In the early stages of the outbreak, this was done largely through stay-at-home orders and recommendations as well as the closure of business, gathering places and events. While many of the restrictions will be eased in the coming months, until there is an effective and widely available vaccine, social distancing and a lowering of social density will still be our best tool at combating the pandemic.

The ATA will evaluate conditions and regulations for appropriate group sizes. Volunteers and staff will not exceed group size limitations. Groups of 9 or fewer volunteers may work together on the trail for single-day activities under the following Expanded Safety Protocols:



FACEMASKS

The ATA requires staff and strongly recommends that volunteers utilize facemasks while performing activities on the Arizona Trail [as per CDC recommendations](#). When used correctly and properly cared for, facemasks:

- ☞ May reduce the spread of pathogens to others by containing your own respiratory and oral droplets and aerosols
- ☞ Should be worn even if you feel well — you may be pre-symptomatic, or asymptomatic
- ☞ May prevent droplets and aerosols from coming into contact with your nasal and oral membranes
- ☞ May help prevent you from unconsciously transferring pathogens from your hands to your face, nose and mouth



SOCIAL DISTANCING

- ☞ It is standard protocol to observe a 10-foot distancing rule while hiking and working with tools to reduce the risk posed by tool-related hazards
- ☞ Standard protocols also dictate maintaining a 6-10 foot distancing whenever possible on the trail
- ☞ If social distancing is not feasible, trail workers in close proximity to one another **will wear facemasks**
- ☞ When encountering other trail users, it is ideal to maintain a distance of 6-10 feet. If this is not possible due to terrain or conditions, don a facemask. If working on a trail with consistently heavy traffic, wear facemasks.



CLEANING AND SANITIZING HANDS

This is standard protocol for healthy living and workplace safety. During an epidemic, all employees and volunteers should be particularly disciplined in these behaviors and should help create a culture of accountability within the entire crew.

- ☞ Wash/ Clean: To physically remove contaminants (dirt, grease, food, bodily fluids, pathogens etc.) from the skin, or a surface or object; typically achieved with friction and solvents, as in the lathering and scrubbing of soap, which is then rinsed off with water.
- ☞ Sanitize/ Disinfect: To denature any remaining pathogens on the skin or the surface of an object, destroying characteristic properties or molecular structures of those pathogens by applying heat, acidity, or other disruptive agents (like alcohol or bleach).



USE AND CARE OF TOOLS TO PREVENT TRANSMISSION

- ☞ As always, everyone must wear gloves when handling tools for any length of time
- ☞ During an epidemic, tools should not be shared. Instead, designate tools for each crew member for the entire event whenever possible. It's helpful to label tools with volunteer name using adhesive tape and marker since all tools look alike.
- ☞ After/between trips, crews/crew leaders will wash all tool handles with bleach wipes or sanitization procedures (see Tool Check-in/Check-out procedures in the Field Safety Manual).



USE AND CARE OF PPE TO PREVENT TRANSMISSION

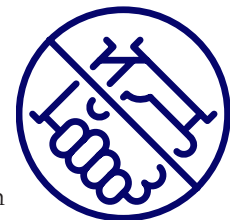
This protocol applies to non-pathogen PPE (hard hats, gloves and goggles).

- ☞ After/between trips volunteer leaders and staff will clean any re-usable hard PPE (hard hats and goggles) including their own with bleach wipes or sanitization procedures (see Tool Check-in/Check-out procedures).
- ☞ Hard hats should be “gifted” to returning volunteers.
- ☞ Consider washing PPE items during extended trips (if conditions allow).
- ☞ Cleaning of hard hats should include plastic support suspensions within the interior of the hard hat.
- ☞ **Do NOT share used PPE until they have been washed.**
- ☞ Volunteers are encouraged to bring and utilize their own PPE whenever possible. Hard hats and gloves can be issued to volunteers for use throughout their future volunteering career with the ATA.



FOOD AND WATER HANDLING TO PREVENT TRANSMISSION

- ☞ During times of epidemic, the ATA will not encourage or provide group meals. Snacks may be provided only in pre-packaged individual servings. Food should not be shared among volunteers.
- ☞ Individuals will be responsible for their own water and beverages. Do not share water drinking bottles or larger jugs for refilling.
- ☞ If it is necessary to share water, sanitize any spigot, handle or other item that has come in contact with hands, mouths or bottles with bleach wipes or other sanitization procedure.



TRANSPORTATION

To maintain social distancing and sanitation, the ATA discourages ride sharing and carpooling for the duration of the outbreak. Transportation may be shared by individuals not practicing social distancing such as members of the same household, but otherwise all participants should arrive at the worksite on their own.



We will get through this together!
Thanks for volunteering with the Arizona Trail Association