



# Health and Safety Guidelines for Hike Haliburton

**HIKE HALIBURTON** is a County of Haliburton event. These guidelines are to ensure the safety of hikers.

## Definitions:

**HIKE LEADER:** Person appointed/designated by Hike Haliburton to lead the hike.

**SWEEP:** Volunteer participant who is last in the group to ensure that no one in the group is left behind.

## Guidelines:

Hike Haliburton leaders and/or sweep will ensure that they have a mobile phone.

**Before the hike begins the hike leader will review emergency procedures outlined in this document with the volunteer sweep and the group as a whole.**

Hike Haliburton will ensure that there is at least one person on each hiking event to provide basic first aid if needed. **Do not attempt** any care on your own that would not be performed in your own home (e.g. bandage for small cut), for any emergency or serious concern, call 9-1-1 immediately.

Always ensure you are carrying a first aid kit and way to communicate.

Look up hazards in the area you are hiking in before you go and ensure that you are prepared for the worst.

Each situation is unique so hikers need to assess the situation and make your best determination on the best response. Your good judgment is what keeps you safe while hiking anywhere.

## Dealing with Emergencies

Hike Haliburton appoints Hike Leaders to organize volunteers and participants on planned and coordinated outdoor hiking events organized by Hike Haliburton.

In the event of an emergency during the hike the Hike Leader will assume charge and will take the following action:

1. Safeguard the participants without putting yourself at risk. Ensure that you and your group are safe, *and then* ensure any casualties are safe from further incident/accident.
2. Assess the situation; identify any casualties, identify any further hazards. Remove the influence of any hazards as you see fit.
3. Rapidly assess the injury/ies and have the Sweep contact the emergency services as appropriate, giving clear instructions on the location, number in your party, immediately obvious injuries and instructions to allow them to effectively bring help.

4. Pay close attention to the condition of your **whole** group. Prioritize according to the nature of injury. Act as required.
5. Evacuate, if possible and without putting anyone in the group at further risk, escort the whole group to the nearest point of contact - road, farm, etc.
6. Report the full incident to the Hike Haliburton Project Manager, (as soon as possible after having dealt with the emergency).
7. Complete the Incident or Accident report forms available from the Hike Haliburton Project Manager.

### **Additional General Hiking Tips**

The best medicine for adventurers is that of prevention.

- Keep together. Should the group become separated then follow this procedure
- The International signal of distress is six good medium blasts by whistle. The reply is three long blasts.
- Even when going on a hike with somebody else, always let people know your destination and when to expect you back
- A day before the actual hike, watch the weather report. If heavy showers or other inclement weather is in the forecast, you may need to reschedule your hiking trip
- Bring plenty of water along (more than you think you will need)
- Dress appropriately. This may not sound like a safety rule, but it will actually keep you safe and healthy if you do it right. Make sure you have rain gear and are dressed in layers, so you can adjust to the surrounding temperatures as they change. Wearing the right hiking shoes will keep your feet from developing blisters and getting injured. Low shoes, for example, can increase your chances for a twisted ankle or lower leg injury
- Leave local plants and animals alone. Don't eat berries or leaves you find, even if they look familiar. Making loud noises or wandering away from the marked trails can put you into direct contact with snakes and other dangerous animals, so avoid it when possible. Don't approach or attempt to feed wild animals
- Leave everything as you found it