

Delaware Valley Chapter

Emailing Lists Policies and Guidelines

General

1. All email lists within the Chapter are run by Chapter volunteers. These volunteers perform a valuable service to the Chapter and its members without any compensation.
2. Requests for establishing any new email list must be approved by the Chapter Chair. The person requesting the new email list must show that it provides a unique service for the chapter that cannot be provided by existing services.
 - The request for the new email list should state its purpose, what need it meets, how activity listings will be administered, and how the subscriber base will be maintained and updated.
 - All email lists must adhere to applicable AMC and chapter policies, including those stipulated within this document.
 - If a new email list is approved, it must be documented within an updated version of this document.
3. All email lists must have the Chapter Chair and Chapter Vice-Chair in the subscriber base, unless such Chairs elect not otherwise.
4. Email lists are subject to technical difficulties beyond the control of the chapter, such as recipient and network spam controls, delivery problems, Internet bottlenecks or the like. These conditions may result in a submission being dropped, a recipient failing to receive a posting, or a subscriber being locked out of or removed from a list. People who experience these types of problems should first attempt to follow normal procedures such as resubmitting the subscription request or resubmitting the posting before contacting the list moderators.

Postings

1. Depending on the email list and the nature of a posting, it may take several days or more to complete the approval of the posting. If an event is unusual or there may be concerns about its appropriateness as a chapter activity, the submitter should discuss the event with the applicable Chairs before submission to the email list.
2. All activities posted to chapter email lists are AMC events which
 - a. Shall comply with all AMC requirements, including the then-current *AMC Leader Requirements and Guidelines*.
 - b. Should not be advertisements for non-AMC activities.
3. Maintainers must set up email lists so that they comply with all stipulations in this policy. Compliance can be achieved by, amongst other methods, constructing the email list to: (i) moderate postings; (ii) permit only approved leaders to submit postings; (iii) where the users demonstrate proper discretion, permit those subscribed to the emailing list to submit postings.
 - Since *AMC Leader Requirements and Guidelines* require approval for any backcountry activity, self-approval is not permitted for email lists used to distribute such activities.
4. Many people are inundated with email and thus do not subscribe to high volume email lists. As such, postings should comply with the following guidelines:

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- Not be a reminder. Most activities listed in Footnotes or AMC Outdoors should not be reiterated as a posting to an email list. Exceptions that may warrant a reminder include:
 - Special events, such as for the Annual Dinner, Activities Social, or Annual Picnic.
 - Where a special or important event may have unusually low registration.
- Not be a minor correction. That is, unless the correction substantially changes the nature of the message, a correction should not be sent as a posting to an email list.
- Not be used for a purpose ancillary to the event, such as car-pool coordination or determine overnight accommodation details. Such ancillary purposes are best handled directly with the activity's registrants.
- The subject line of the message should be a brief summary of the message. For an activity, it is customary to include in the subject line activity type (e.g., day hike, backpack, and so on), location, date, and activity classification, as applicable. Blank subject lines may cause the message to be blocked by SPAM filters.

An example submission would look like:

Subject: Sun, May 7; Hike; French Creek State Park; 3C9

Body: More detailed information including:

- Description of the activity
 - Contact information for the leaders and/or registrars
 - Special instructions for the activity, including any special safety considerations, such as water, food, clothing, and the like.
 - The body may contain hyperlinks, but the validity of any hyperlinks is the responsibility of the submitter, who should test the links before submission. The email list moderators and approvers are not required to test links.
- Good spelling and grammar are useful to avoid the message getting blocked by SPAM filters.
 - Show-n-go¹ should not be cancelled. Many people who may be aware of the event may not be subscribed to the email list and may not hear about the cancellation. Instead, the event should not be submitted as a show-n-go, the event's leaders should recruit an alternate leader if they cannot attend, or they should be present at the meeting location to deal with people who arrive.

Approvals

1. Postings should be distributed at least two (2) full calendar days before the start of the activity. For example, an activity on Saturday must be submitted, approved and distributed to the email list after approval no later than Wednesday. It is best to submit postings much

¹ A *show-n-go* activity is one that lists the meeting place and time in the original listing. Leaders need to be careful with listing activities as *show-n-go* since it is impossible to let most people know if the activity needs to be cancelled.

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farther in advance, though. The only permissible exception to this stipulation is where the event requires a specific occurrence that cannot be forecasted several days in advance, such as weather conditions for snowshoeing or an unexpected dam release for paddling.

2. Anyone posting an activity must be an approved leader for the activity.
3. All posted activities must be approved by the applicable Activity Chair.

If an email list is moderated, an Activity Chair may delegate approval to the email list moderators.

- This delegation, where chosen, is on an activity-by-activity base and is at the discretion of each current Activity Chair.
 - Each Activity Chair should consider this option carefully and determine that all moderators for the email list have knowledge of all applicable policies related to the activity and have the temperament and skills necessary to perform the approval function for their activity.
 - Approval of a new moderator is subject to approval by the chapter's Executive Committee.
4. For non-activity email lists, such as for Young Members, posted activities must be approved by the applicable Activity Chair(s). For instance, a Young Members backpack must be approved by the Backpack Chair.
 5. Where a posting includes multiple activities, approval must be received separately from each applicable Activity Chair. The exception is that postings of activities that include a social component need only be approved by the applicable Activity Chair(s) and not also by the Social Chair.
 6. Social-only postings must be approved by the Social Chair.
 7. The decision to approve a posting is at the discretion of the email list moderators in conjunction with the applicable members of the Executive Committee. See also *Approval 3* above.
 8. If an approved activity exists, submission for similar events should not be approved. Similarity typically involves the same type of activity occurring in the same geographic area on the same day. Leaders should be considerate of other leaders who have listed activities in publications such as *AMC Outdoors* and *Footnotes*. Publication of activities provides many benefits to activity participants as well as the chapter and AMC. As such, leaders posting activities to email lists, even when such activities do not strictly clash with pre-existing activities, should consider whether the new activity may draw people from the pre-existing activity, which may potentially cause difficulties or need to cancel that pre-existing activity.
 9. All approved activities must be submitted to the AMC at leadership@outdoors.org. The easiest method of accomplishing this is to include this email address in the email list subscriber base.

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Current Mailing Lists

Hotline

Requests: hotline-requests@amcdv.org

Submissions: dvamc_hotline@yahoogroups.com

Structure: Moderated

Audience: Current chapter members

Maintainer: Hotline administrators

Subscription: New members and newly reactivated old members are invited to join the list approximately each month based on membership data from the AMC.

Removal: Members whose membership has expired are deleted from the list once their membership expires.

Considerations:

1. Approval of day hikes is typically delegated to the list moderators. As such, most postings are approved within a couple of days.
2. All other activities typically require approval from the applicable Chair. As such, approval may take significantly longer. The moderators will notify the posting leader if an unusual delay in approval has occurred. For instance, if the applicable Chair is out of town for a while, the approval will be delayed and the moderator will notify the poster as such.
3. Given the timeframe for approval, leaders should try to submit postings at least 7 to 10 days before the activity starts.
4. Leaders should wait at several days before initiating action if they suspect their submission may be lost. Follow-up action should be in the form of a message to the email list maintainers and/or moderators as well as an applicable activity Chairs.

Leaders List

Requests: hotline-requests@amcdv.org

Submissions: dvamc_leaders@yahoogroups.com

Structure: Unmoderated, with submissions from subscribed chapter leaders

Audience: Current chapter leaders

Maintainer: Hotline administrators

Subscription: New leaders are invited to join the list

Removal: Since a leader must be an AMC member, a leader whose membership or leader certification has lapsed is deleted from the list. In addition, any leader who posts offensive or otherwise inappropriate messages will either have their posting capabilities revoked or be removed from the list.

Considerations:

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1. Activities shall not be submitted to the Leaders List.
2. Unmoderated email lists can fall victim to “flame wars” where a small group of people engage in personal attacks through the list. Further, email messages are frequently misinterpreted. As such, people who submit postings should:
 - Make sure that their posting is civil and does not attack, either directly or indirectly.
 - Try to make their posting constructive.
 - If the posting is specific to another person, try to talk offline or one-on-one with that person.
 - The Chapter has almost 200 leaders, with most subscribed to the Leaders List. It is likely that the person submitting a posting will know only a fraction of the people on the Leaders List. Accordingly, postings should be appropriate for such a large, relatively anonymous audience.

Executive Committee List

Requests: hotline-requests@amcdv.org

Submissions: dvamc_executive_committee@yahoogroups.com

Structure: Unmoderated, with submissions from subscribed chapter leaders

Audience: Current members of the Executive Committee, as well as other ex-officio members at the discretion of the Chapter Chair

Maintainer: Designated member of the Executive Committee

Subscription: Upon election to the Executive Committee or by request from the Chapter Chair

Removal: Upon retirement from the Executive Committee or by request from the Chapter Chair

Considerations:

1. Limited to Executive Committee business

Conservation List

Requests: dvamc_conservation-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Submissions: dvamc_conservation@yahoogroups.com

Structure: Moderated

Audience: Anyone interested in conversation and environmental issues

Maintainer: Conservation Chair

Subscription: Upon request

Removal: Upon request

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Mid-Jersey Group List

Requests: amcdv_mid-jersey-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Submissions: amcdv_mid-jersey @yahoogroups.com

Structure: Moderated

Audience: AMC members interested in activities in central New Jersey

Maintainer: Mid-Jersey Chair

Subscription: Upon request

Removal: Upon request

Young Members List

Requests: ym_dvamc_hotline-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Submissions: ym_dvamc_hotline@yahoogroups.com

Structure: Moderated

Audience: People interested in activities focused towards younger adults

Maintainer: Young Members Chair

Subscription: Upon request

Removal: Upon request