



# Support Ongoing Leader Training

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## Why Supporting Leader Training is Important

Supporting ongoing leader training helps to retain current leaders by building their confidence and skills. Ongoing training can also encourage dormant leaders to be more involved. Chapters that publicize training opportunities, manage training events, and/or pay for training demonstrate their commitment to their leaders and cultivate a community of learning that celebrates growth and inclusion of all ability levels.

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## How to Establish Support for Leader Training

### Publicize Training Opportunities

- Identify upcoming training opportunities to share with your leaders. These can be activities offered by other chapters, affinity-group-specific training, and training offered by AMC including but not limited to Wilderness First Aid (WFA), as well as courses offered by outside vendors such as for climbing, white water paddling, and advanced winter skills that require a high level of expertise.

### Manage Training Events

- To manage training events in your chapter, first determine what you want to offer, how often, and when. Establish the role that is responsible for each type of training event. Include that responsibility in their role description so that when there is turnover, the training events have continuity. The person responsible can be the chair of an existing committee, such as the Leader, Education, or Activity Committee. That person in that role should solicit additional volunteers to help support the training.

## **Paying for Training**

- Allocate budget for ongoing leader training in the annual budget process, both for managing events run by the chapter as well as scholarships for external courses. Establish consistent, documented policies for scholarships. These policies should be accessible to your leaders, preferably on your chapter website.
- Policies can be based on a leader being “active” as defined by your chapter. Determine whether your chapter deems leaders-in-training (LITs) eligible and/or whether they can be reimbursed if they achieve full leadership within a defined time period. Ask LITs, new leaders, and experienced leaders for feedback on your “paying for training” policies and adjust the policies to address any barriers or needs that arise.

## **Examples:**

### **Publicize Training Opportunities**

- On a regular basis, publish schedule of all available AMC training opportunities on the chapter website or via leader emails. Use Outdoors Connector to filter by Activity Type such as Education, First Aid, Training. Although individual leaders can do this query on their own, they may not do so consistently, so it is valuable to push this information to them. Try to make this information as accessible as possible.
- Provide listing of vendor courses eligible for (partial or full) reimbursement. This would be based on skills relevant for that chapter and activity type.

### **Manage Training Events**

- Potential training events that chapters can offer include:
  - Winter hiking workshop
  - Map & Compass
  - Water crossing for hikers
  - Navigation apps for hikers, bikers, paddlers
- Survey leaders for types of leader enrichment sessions they would find valuable.

- Consider partnering with neighboring chapters to host in-person enrichment sessions.
- Identify trainings that can be offered virtually to increase reach
  - Record session and post on chapter website

## **Paying for Training**

- At least annually, communicate the scholarship policy to leaders. The policy is determined by each chapter based on their budget and skills they deem relevant.
- Policies should request that reimbursement requests be submitted in advance of the training so that the leader is clear on what will be reimbursed.
- Determine which training is recommended versus required. If training is required, and there is a cost, consider providing reimbursement.
- Do not mandate so much training to the point of overwhelming leaders. We want leaders to enjoy the training, not to be burdened by it.
- Reimburse Wilderness First Aid (WFA) training at least up to the leader-subsidized amount that AMC charges. Note, some leaders choose to take WFA with other vendors. If AMC does not offer WFA in the region, consider reimbursing the full amount if WFA is required for the activity and some portion if WFA is not required for the activity. It is out of scope of this best practice document to define which activities and difficulty ratings warrant WFA.
- Establish a dollar limit for certain courses or for a specific leader in a calendar year.
- Consider scholarships for travel expenses, transportation, childcare, etc. to encourage participation by leaders with financial need.
- Identify the type of training that is valuable for leaders based on activity and level of difficulty.