

FIELD SAFETY POLICY & PROCEDURES

The Geological Society of America (GSA) offers numerous field experiences throughout the year. Safety is our top priority; GSA is committed to taking all reasonable precautions to ensure that field trips are run in a safe, professional manner. GSA expects all participants, including trip leaders and other attendees, to conduct themselves with respect and maturity, to abide by GSA's [Events Code of Conduct](#), and to adhere to the guidelines set forth below.

This Policy includes 3 sections:

- Part A of this Policy sets forth Trip Leaders' Responsibilities.
- Part B sets forth Participants' Responsibilities.
- Part C explains Reporting Unacceptable Behavior.

A. Trip Leaders' Responsibilities

Trip leaders are responsible for setting a positive example by working safely and taking reasonable steps to plan and promote a safe, professional experience for all participants. In addition, trip leaders are responsible for:

Pre-Trip Planning

- **Emergency Contacts.** GSA strongly encourages participants to complete an Individual Information form so that trip leaders will have the details they need in case of an emergency. Trip leaders should familiarize themselves with this information before the start of each trip.
- **Transportation.** Trip leaders are responsible for arranging appropriate transportation for field trips, such as busses, vans, or SUVs. If vans are used, the maximum number of passengers – including the driver – is 12. All participants must use the transportation provided in connection with the field trip and wear seat belts. The use of personal vehicles is prohibited. All drivers must be at least 21 years old and will be required to sign and return to GSA a driver agreement form with a copy of their driver's license and other relevant information required by GSA, its insurance company, or rental company.
- **First Aid.** GSA will provide each trip leader with an appropriate first-aid kit. Trip leaders should:
 - Make sure they have a current certification in basic first aid skills.
 - For trips to wilderness or off-trail areas, make sure that at least one trip leader has completed Wilderness First Aid or a higher-level field-based safety course;
 - Identify the nearest medical facility to the trip location;
 - Review the Good Samaritan law for each state in which they are planning a field trip.
- **Second-In-Command.** Trip leaders should designate another leader to be second-in-command in case they have an accident or injury during the trip. Trip leaders are expected to provide GSA with the name and contact information of their back up leader before the trip begins. The second-in-command must have appropriate first-aid training and be knowledgeable about the trip itinerary, emergency contact information, location of cell phones, and location of first-aid supplies.

- Events Code of Conduct and Respectful Inclusive Scientific Events (RISE). GSA's Events Code of Conduct and RISE help ensure that GSA continues to offer a respectful, safe, and inclusive environment at all GSA events, including field trips. Trip leaders are expected to
 - Read the Events Code of Conduct before each field trip so they are familiar with the requirements and expectations, including the ability to report issues to GSA at ethics@geosociety.org.
 - Plan to hold a short meeting to review the Events Code of Conduct with participants at the start of each field trip. In such meetings, trip leaders should be sure to notify participants of the ways in which they can report concerns during the field trip. In doing so, trip leaders should identify at least one other person participants can report to in case they do not feel comfortable going to the trip leader directly. Trip leaders should also let participants know that they can report issues at any time using either ethics@geosociety.org.

During the Field Trip

- Hold at least one assembly at the beginning of the trip to cover safety, first aid, and rules of conduct including Events Code of Conduct.
- Identify potential hazards and take appropriate steps to mitigate them;
- In case of an accident, injury, or illness, make it a priority to ensure the safety of all participants, while making necessary arrangements to tend any injured parties. After doing so, contact the GSA staff person assigned to your field trip and fill out an Incident Report Form.
- Avoid missing persons. When departing from any location, take a head count to make sure all participants are present and safe;
- Ensure that all participants comply with alcohol and drug guidelines. Except as explained below, Participants are prohibited from possessing or using illegal drugs and consuming alcohol or using other legal intoxicants during scheduled in-field activities, mid-day breaks, and transportation to and from field activities. If participants choose to drink or use other legal intoxicants during their free time, they must do so responsibly without compromising their ability to act professionally and safely. On rare occasions, a field trip may involve visits to wineries to taste different flavors of terroir at a particular location, such as the Willamette Valley. Such visits may be permitted, but only with the prior approval of GSA's Executive Director.
- Ensure that all participants, including trip leaders, abide by GSA's Events Code of Conduct. Harassment, intimidation, bullying, and discrimination in any form are expressly prohibited. As a trip leader, if a participant fails to follow GSA's Events Code of Conduct or other rules, you have the discretion to remove the participant from the field trip or any trip activities and return them to the trip accommodation/camp or point of trip origination. In so doing, the participant may be required to forfeit any and all amounts paid for the trip.

B. Participants' Responsibilities

Participants are responsible for conducting themselves on field trips with maturity and respect for others and taking care to ensure the safety of themselves and other participants. In addition, participants are responsible for:

- Following the instructions of trip leaders at all times.
- Reading and agreeing to comply with GSA's Events Code of Conduct, which specifically prohibits harassment, intimidation, bullying, or discrimination in any form.
- Respecting the properties, structures, areas, and vehicles at and on which activities occur, and observing all rules and regulations of the properties, structures, areas, and vehicles.
- Bringing and wearing appropriate clothing and footwear at all times.
- Showing respect to others, including non-participants and the general public, at all times, including in the evening hours.
- Never initiating or being involved in any activity that is dangerous to themselves or others.

- If alcohol or other legal intoxicants are allowed on a trip, not using these substances during field activities, or transportation to/from field activities. If participants choose to drink or use other legal intoxicants during their free time, they must do so responsibly without compromising their ability to act professionally and safely.
- Never leaving the group or the accommodation/camp without the trip leaders' permission.
- Not using field trip vehicles for any purpose other than as permitted by trip leaders.
- Not possessing or using any illegal drugs while on the trip.
- Not possessing weapons, including firearms, unless part of a trip leader equipment package.
- Not using cell phones on the field trip in trip vehicles except as permitted by the trip leaders.

If a participant does not observe the Events Code of Conduct or other field trip rules, GSA and/or trip leaders have the discretion to take such actions as they deem appropriate in response to such violations, including removing participants from the trip or trip activities, returning participants to the trip accommodation/camp or point of trip origination, and requiring participants to forfeit any trip-related amounts they have paid for the trip.

C. Reporting Unacceptable Behavior

Any participant who experiences or observes unsafe or unacceptable behavior is encouraged to inform the person engaged in this conduct directly that the conduct is unwelcome or unsafe and must stop. Participants should also report unsafe or acceptable conduct to the trip leaders at an early stage to prevent its escalation. If the trip leader is alleged to have engaged in unsafe or unacceptable behavior, participants should notify the GSA staff member assigned to their trip, or contact GSA at ethics@geosociety.org.