



Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Return to the Hiking Program Plan May 2021 Update

As Ontario moves out of lockdown and into the [three-step plan](#) to reopen the province, the Return to Hiking Program Plan has been updated. Our highest priority continues to be the safety and wellbeing of all our Staff and Volunteers.

This coronavirus (COVID-19) return to the hiking program plan is susceptible to changes with the introduction of additional governmental guidelines. When changes occur, Hike Directors and Hike Leaders will be updated, as soon as possible, by email. As the situation develops, changes to this plan may occur. The BTC will confirm as each Step is reached by the Province.

The hiking program will continue to be restricted to members in Step 1 and members and their guests in Step 2. This will show loyalty to our members and encourage people to renew or join. Once restrictions on outdoor group sizes are lifted or increased in Step 3, then the hiking program will open to everyone, members and non-members.

No Hike Leader should feel that they are being forced to lead hikes. The decision to lead hikes is up to each individual volunteer to decide. The BTC supports each Hike Leader's decision.

Step 1:

- Hiking program can reopen in all Club sections with a limit of 10 hikers per hike, including the hike leader and sweep (8 hikers, 1 hike leader, and 1 sweep)
- Members only on hikes
- No car shuttles or bus hikes are permitted – all hikes must be out and back or loop hikes
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from each other
- It is strongly recommended that both Hikers and Hike Leaders wear face masks during the hike
- Hike Leaders and Hikers can carry hand sanitizer, but should not be sharing it with the group
- Individual end to ends of the entire Bruce Trail can resume and will be acknowledged

Step 2:

- Hike capacity will increase to 25 hikers
- Members and guests only on hikes
- No car shuttles or bus hikes are permitted – all hikes must be out and back or loop hikes
- Keep a distance of at least 6 feet from each other
- It is strongly recommended that both Hikers and Hike Leaders wear face masks during the hike
- Hike Leaders and Hikers can carry hand sanitizer, but should not be sharing it with the group

Step 3:

- Hikes will be open with no capacity restrictions, unless outdoor capacity limits are put in place by the Province for Step 3

- Car shuttles and bus hikes may resume
- Group end to end hikes may resume
- Event hikes may resume

Health and COVID-19 symptoms:

- Each hiker must perform a self-screening check before hiking <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/>
- Hikers and Hike Leaders are to follow the protocols laid out on the BTC website for safe hiking
- Hikers who experience COVID-19 symptoms following a hike, must inform Public Health. Public Health will be responsible for contact tracing.

Safety Talk for Hike Leaders for Step 1 and 2

At the beginning of any organized hike please perform the following safety talk to inform the participants of the protocol for COVID 19.

As the hike leader you should know the symptoms of COVID-19 <https://ca.thrive.health/covid19/en>. If any participants show the following signs, ask them not to participate:

- new or worsening cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- temperature equal to or over 38°C
- feeling feverish
- chills
- fatigue or weakness
- muscle or body aches
- new loss of smell or taste
- headache
- gastrointestinal symptoms (abdominal pain, diarrhea, vomiting)
- feeling very unwell

In your talk with hikers please cover the following items:

- Remind people not to share anything including bug repellent, sunscreen, hand sanitizer, water etc.
- Remind hikers to bring their own first aid kits
- Inform people to keep a distance of at least 2 arms lengths (approximately 2 metres) from others, as much as possible
- At the current time, ensure no more than 10 people are in the group. This will change as provincial guidelines change
- Ensure people move aside to allow others to pass
- Pack out everything you bring on your hike
- Inform hikers that masks are strongly recommended for everyone's safety
- Know your location before the hike and in case of an emergency call 911

Reminder – vaccination is not a pre-condition of participating in the hiking program. Please do not ask whether or not hikers have been vaccinated.