



## PHILMONT EXPEDITION POLICIES

[Last edited: August 5, 2017]

Troop 50 has adopted the following Philmont Expedition Policies:

### Fitness:

- A Philmont Trek will be one of the most strenuous adventures of your life. You'll be carrying a 40- to 55-pound pack for 5 to 15 miles per day, up and down mountains at high altitude (6,000 to 12,400 feet). The air is thin and the mountains are steep. Starting several months in advance (more for adults), start walking a challenging (but not injury-inducing) distance. Increase your distance every week or so and then add some elevation, such as a local parking garage, stadium, stairwell or hill you can climb along your route. After you've reached 5 or 6 miles a day, start carrying a pack, first with nothing in it and then adding weight weekly up to 60 pounds. You'll be ready for Philmont if you have a clear-eyed plan and stick to it.
- The height/weight limitations in the Philmont Medical Form are not suggestions; they're mandatory. A Scout is Trustworthy, so be honest about your weight and fitness. The trail is no place find out you're not ready.
- **Physical conditioning is paramount. Crew Advisors, in their sole discretion, may disqualify anyone who is not physically prepared at any time.**

### Practice Hikes:

- Two practice hikes are scheduled on the Troop Calendar. Please take note and put them on your personal calendar. These are mandatory for all Philmont Crew Members (new and experienced Philmont Campers). No exceptions - sufficient time has been provided for you to reserve the date.
- Practice Hikes serve several purposes:
  - To teach Crew Member roles and how your crew will function on the trail as a team.
  - Teach Philmont Camping methods, including bear safety procedures, campsite layout & set-up, proper food preparation and clean-up.
  - Equipment shake down. Each Crew member will empty his pack and discuss the contents with his Crew.
  - The hike itself will be approximately 5 miles and include strenuous terrain (similar to the boundary trail that wraps around Cleburne State Park). This is your opportunity to test yourself to see if you're ready. Measure yourself against your Crew members to make sure you can maintain a complimentary pace.
- Decisions to not participate, poor performance or poor attitude at the practice hike may result in your disqualification from the Trek, at the sole discretion of your Crew Advisor.

### Equipment:

- Troop 50 has been hiking at Philmont for well over 30 years. Many, many lessons have been learned and passed down about equipment and procedures that work and those that don't. Simple things like a cool-rim Sierra Cup with spoon attached for all eating/drinking have proven to work best for meals and clean-up. Follow the troop's recommendations. Non-compliance, even with the simple things, can cause more problems than you can imagine.
- Your trek money is best spent on:
  - *Proper fitting, rugged and waterproof hiking boots:* Break them in with at least 50+ miles before Philmont. Don't just "make do".
  - *Durable rain gear:* Pants and jacket are required - no ponchos. You may spend an entire day or more in rain gear while wearing a pack. So, it must be durable and waterproof to avoid hypothermia – which puts you and your Crew at risk.
  - *A sturdy, framed pack:* It must be big enough to carry all your gear, including your water bottles, as well as your share of crew gear and food. The troop has several loaners available as do some of the old-timers.
- **Proper gear is critical. Crew Advisors, in their sole discretion, may disqualify anyone who is not properly equipped at any time.**

### Clothing & Packing:

- Do not bring cotton socks, underwear, pants or shirts. No cotton of any kind. You will get wet and cotton does not dry quickly enough.
- Heavy coats are discouraged. They take up too much room and add weight. Instead, layer up. Layers under a light fleece and a rain jacket will be enough on the coolest evening.
- Long underwear (base layer) is mentioned throughout the Philmont Guidebook, but you'll be trekking in July and cold nights are rare. Consider your personal comfort and pack accordingly.
- To minimize blisters, wear Smartwool, wool or Thorlos outer socks over light (polypro) liners.
- Do not haul unnecessary stuff. Pay attention at "shakedown".
- **Light, good quality clothing is essential. Crew Advisors, in their sole discretion, may disqualify anyone who is not sufficiently outfitted at any time.**

### Water and Food:

- Strenuous activity in a dry alpine environment can quickly result in dehydration and altitude sickness. It also burns a lot more calories than you typically consume at home.
- Each Crew Member must carry three sturdy 1.5-liter water bottles. In addition, each Crew Member must drink one entire 1.5-liter bottle of water each morning before hitting the trail (*i.e.*, "*cameling up*"). No exceptions! And be sure to hold other Crew Members accountable.
- Each Crew Member must also eat the food provided, *whether you like or not!* Philmont has carefully planned the meals to ensure enough fuel and protein to make it through. *Eat the food!*
- **Proper hydration and nutrition are vital. Crew Advisors, in their sole discretion, may disqualify anyone who is not adequately hydrating and eating at any time.**

### Attitude:

- There will be days that test your patience and perseverance. That's part of the experience and part of working together as a Crew. A Philmont Trek is about working together like a well-oiled machine, and not so much about personal comfort and amenities. You see, it's not all about you, it's about the Crew. Be prepared and willing to put your personal needs and preferences aside for the sake of your Crew. Your goal should be to always do your best to ensure your

Crew's success and safety; after all, **your Crew depends on you and you depend on your Crew.**

- Trek itineraries show the numbers of miles hiked and offer various choices, and you'll have additional options along the way. Your Crew is only as strong as its weakest link. Choose wisely.
- Everyone in your Crew should do his best to watch out for his fellow Crew Members. Pay attention. Make sure everyone is taking care of themselves. Even the smallest issues (blisters, chafing, wet clothing, etc.) can quickly become big problems for everyone.
- **A good attitude is fundamental. Crew Advisors, in their sole discretion, may at any time disqualify anyone who exhibits a chronically bad attitude, or who engages in offensive behavior, foul language or willful disregard of others and these Policies, or who is otherwise dragging the Crew down.**

#### **Electronics:**

- Consider your Philmont Trek to be a golden opportunity to go off-line and get away from it all. Free yourself from that phone anchor. Relish the opportunity to tap into God's awesome creation by disconnecting from virtual reality for just 11 days. ***Just Do it!***
- Each Crew's Adult Advisor (and perhaps one other adult) will carry a phone (turned off in his pack) for emergencies.
- As standing troop policy, Scouts are not allowed to bring electronics or phones on campouts, including the trail at Philmont.
- The only exceptions are phone use while driving to and from Cimarron and in Philmont Base Camp, *but only for calling home and only so long as it doesn't detract from the experience.* You should not, however, be video gaming, watching shows, interfacing with social media, emailing or any other electronic activities other than the limited phone use as described above and taking photos in Base Camp. So, turn your phone off and pack it in your "go home" bag in the trailer before hitting the trail.
- Do not post photos on FaceBook or other social media sites from the trail. If you want to take photos on the trail, bring a compact digital camera and share them when you get home.
- Solar chargers and battery packs are now widely available, but that's no reason to spoil your wilderness experience.
- If you engage in excessive or unnecessary electronic or phone activities, you will be asked to turn it off, put it away and rejoin your Crew. If you persist, you may be asked to turn your devices over to your Adult Advisor until returning home.
- Scouters are strongly encouraged to set an example by following the same rules. If a Scouter must check in at work, please explain your situation to your Adult Advisor and then do it discreetly so you don't intrude upon the Crew's wilderness experience or create resentment.
- **Surrendering yourself to the genuine Philmont Experience is what it's all about. Crew Advisors, in their sole discretion, may disqualify anyone who is using electronics or phones improperly at any time.**

**REMINDER:** Don't be that guy who's not in shape or whose gear doesn't work right or who's always on his phone, checking email or worrying about things back home while the other guys are enjoying a mountain-top sunset. Don't be that guy who gets dehydrated because he didn't "camel-up" in the morning or malnourished because he's too picky to eat the trail vittles. Don't be that guy who overloads his pack with the wrong stuff leaving no room for food or crew gear. Don't be that guy with the bad attitude that makes everyone miserable. Be grateful to be among those fortunate enough to experience Philmont.

Please read the "Philmont Guide Book" and visit the Philmont website "Trek Preparation" link (<http://www.philmontscoutranch.org/TrekPreparation.aspx>) for more in-depth information and coverage of the foregoing subjects.

You are also encouraged to study the Trek your Crew has chosen. Closely read the two page Trek description. You'll find detailed info on the miles and elevation changes to conquer for each of the 11 days on the trail. Purchase or borrow the North / South Country Philmont sectional maps. Mark the trails and see where you're headed. Know the opportunities, options and challenges ahead – Be Prepared!

By signing below, I acknowledge and agree that (a) I have read and understood Troop 50's Philmont Expedition Policies prescribed above as well as the Philmont Guide Book; (b) for the safety and success of my Crew, I will faithfully comply with such policies and guidance, including the instructions and recommendations of my Crew Advisors and Crew Leaders; and (c) my failure to do so may result in my disqualification and removal from my Crew and from any further participation in the trek, including the possibility of having to come off the trail.

CREW MEMBER:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_