

CODE OF CONDUCT

MOUNT ROGERS APPALACHIAN TRAIL CLUB

1. The Organization:

The Mount Rogers Appalachian Trail Club (MRATC) is an all-volunteer organization affiliated with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC). The club and its members work with the United States Forest Service and National Park Service to preserve and maintain the Appalachian Trail (AT). The club encourages others to enjoy the AT and to support it by welcoming the participation of members of local communities, schools and colleges in club activities.

2. Compliance with federal legislation:

MRATC upholds the human rights laws outlined in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

3. Individual Rights and Responsibilities:

Members of MRATC, their guests and visitors have rights and responsibilities to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for trail work and activities.

Rights:

- To be treated with respect without harassment, discrimination, or hostility
- Receive training and support and a suitable assignment for trail work activities
- Have safe working conditions for trail work
- Have qualified supervision and effective use of time

Responsibilities:

- Make safety the highest priority
- Follow trail policies and guidelines
- Seek and accept guidance, training and support
- Encourage trail community members and visitors to maintain a welcoming environment

4. Conduct:

Individuals participating in MRATC's trail work and other activities will uphold these commitments:

- Welcome all people and seek new members, trail stewards, and supporters.
- Maintain a community built on respect, encouragement, and opportunity for all.
- Conduct and participate in activities with safety as the highest priority, while minimizing risk and impacts.
- Respect natural resources.

- Respect the ways other people connect with one another and the outdoors.
- Avoid acting or talking in ways that could be antagonistic to others.

Examples of Misconduct:

- Unwelcome, discriminatory or exclusionary behavior or talk, based on, but not limited to race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, a physical characteristic, ability, age or beliefs. This includes unsolicited judgments on a person's lifestyle choices and practices (food, health, parenting, etc.)
- Assault, verbal or physical harassment, or threats of violence.
- Negligence, disregard for personal or group safety or for land management policies.

5. How to report Misconduct:

Inappropriate conduct, whether observed or experienced, is regarded seriously and will be addressed as quickly as possible. Use one of the several ways below to report misconduct:

- Directly to the organization (MRATC):

- Send request to the general email address to obtain the name and contact information of the trail work or recreational hike leader for the date of the incident (mtrogersatc@gmail.com). Then communicate directly with that person to start the process of addressing the incident.

- Or write a letter to MRATC with "Incident Report for [date]" in the lower left corner of the envelope. (Mt. Rogers AT Club, PO Box 789, Damascus, VA 24236).

- To report to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, use the AT Network Misconduct Reporting Tool

<https://appalachiantrail.org/a-t-network-misconduct-reporting-tool/>

- You may also report to the federal land managing agency:

US Forest Service Reporting Center, 7 days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.:

844-815-8943

National Park Service 24-Hours Dispatch/Communications Center:

866-677-6677.

For all reports, supply the following information:

- Name and contact information of person making report
- Type of misconduct
- Name of person responsible for the conduct offense
- Witnesses, if there are any
- Date, time, location of incident
- Details of incident

6. Note: For situations that are emergencies or incidents not relating to conduct:

For immediate threats to safety, dial 911.

For suspicious activities or to report trail resource damage, use the Incident Report form on the ATC's website.

<https://appalachiantrail.org/explore/plan-and-prepare/report-an-incident/>

7. Procedure for resolution of reported misconduct:

If reported to the club, the leader of the club activity where the incident occurred will confer with the appropriate MRATC Steering Committee Coordinator. If help from the ATC is needed, they will consult ATC Volunteer Relations (Leanna Joyner).

The Leader or the Coordinator will speak to the complainant and the offender about the incident. For offenses considered a serious threat or likely to be repeated, the Leader and Coordinator may decide to ask the offender not to come on future club activities.

The Leader or Coordinator will communicate with the complainant as soon as possible, preferably within five days, to let him/her know how the incident has been addressed. If the incident warrants legal action or discussion with land managing partners (USFS, NPS), full resolution will take longer. Documentation of the incident and resolution steps will be kept in the club's files.

8. Appeal:

If the complainant or the offender is not satisfied with the resolution and wishes to appeal, the ATC and federal land managing partners (USFS, NPS) will be notified and will provide information on next steps and legal processes.