

AMC – Narragansett Chapter
Fiscal Controls and Policies – Trips/Activities/Events
October 12, 2011

The Board has adopted these policies to ensure there are appropriate fiscal controls in place to properly receive, disburse and account for funds associated with trips, activities or events (collectively “trips”). In developing these policies, we took great pains to balance the need for proper controls with the risks associated with improper handling of cash, and the responsibilities already borne by Trip Leaders who make a significant contribution of their time to the Club. We believe these controls balance those concerns. Any questions about these policies should be directed to either the Chapter Treasurer or Board Chair.

1. Trips/activities/events < \$1,000.

For those trips involving \$1,000 or less of receipts, no financial reports are necessary, however, Trip Leaders should retain whatever documentation they judge to be necessary to address any financial questions that might be raised by either a trip participant or Club auditor.

2. Trips/activities/events – over \$1,000 but less than \$1,500.

For those trips involving less than \$1,500 of receipts, the Trip Leader will prepare a financial report detailing the funds received and expended (See Exhibit I). That trip report will be submitted to the Chapter Treasurer within 45 days following the trip.

3. Trips/activities/events > \$1,500.

For those trips involving more than \$1,500 of receipts, the Trip Leader will prepare a financial report detailing the funds received and expended (See Exhibit I). That trip report will be submitted to the Chapter Treasurer within 30 days following the trip, along with receipts for all disbursements totaling \$20 or more.

4. Refunds.

Participant trip costs should be established so that sufficient funds are collected to cover the cost of the trip, cover a portion of the Trip Leader’s and Co-Leader’s costs, and provide a reasonable contingency for any unforeseen events. This includes last minute cancellations. Since Trip Leaders must routinely estimate how many members will participate in a trip, they must by necessity prepare conservative estimates so their trip doesn’t lose money. As such, there will be times when trips do generate profits. If the net ‘profit’ of a trip is more than \$20 per participant, those excess funds must either be returned to the participant, or may be donated to the Chapter at the participant's discretion.

5. Refunds – exceptions.

There will be occasions when Trip Leaders offer training programs for wilderness first aid, beginner rock climbing or safety programs, etc... Where these “community service” programs are offered at a discount to what might be charged by private companies, and that discounted price is deemed “reasonable” by the Sub-Committee Chair, then the activity will be allowed to generate a profit in excess of \$20 per person. Trip Leaders should however, keep in mind that offering these programs at a significant discount provides an added “benefit” to members, which helps the Club retain members, and may also provide an incentive for non-members to join the Club. So Trip Leaders and Sub-Committee Chairs should price their activities accordingly.

6. Leader subsidies.

Trip Leaders often volunteer a significant portion of their time organizing, planning and then running trips. To encourage Trip Leaders and Co-Leaders to do so, and to recognize their significant contribution of time, expertise and skills, the cost for Trip Leaders and Co-Leaders to attend a trip can be subsidized, however no more than 33% of the amount charged to a participant can be related to a Trip Leader or Co-Leader’s subsidy. See Exhibit I for a worksheet which can be used to calculate the amount of the subsidy.

7. Chapter, committee, and personal checking accounts.

The risk of funds not being properly handled is greatest when Club funds are commingled with the personal funds of Trip Leaders. As such, the preference would be that all funds be receipted and disbursed through either the Chapter’s main checking account or a Sub-Committee checking account. Since several Sub-Committees run a number of trips commonly involving larger sums of money, it is acceptable for the Sub-Committee to set up its own checking account and assign several Sub-Committee Leaders with check signing authority. When this occurs, all receipts and disbursements should be run through this checking account, however this does not relieve the Trip Leader of following the procedures already noted above. Use of a Trip Leader’s personal checking account should be the last option used.

8. Club member concerns/complaints.

Any Club member that has any concern about the amount he/she was charged to attend trip or feels funds collected were not appropriately handled, or has any other complaint/concern should be advised to contact the Chapter Chair, in confidence, so that his/her concern can be appropriately vetted and addressed.

9. Exceptions/questions.

Any exception to these policies/controls must be approved by the Executive Board or by the Chapter Chair if a decision is needed between board meetings.