

MELTON BUSHWALKERS INC.

(Registration No. A0020535X)

Walk Safety Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist walk leaders in determining a course of action when a walker is unable or struggling to complete a walk.

Walk Leader

The **walk leader** is responsible for assessing the situation and determining the appropriate course of action. For the walk leader to do this, they must be informed of the situation as soon as possible.

Whatever course of action being taken, the whole walking group needs to be informed.

Course of Action

If the walker cannot continue without assistance:

Contact emergency services for medical attention and evacuation.

Call 000 when mobile phone reception is available.

Volunteers may need to walk to get reception.

Use Emergency+ app if available as it also provides location identification.

Give appropriate first aid if required and possible.

Determine the appropriate course of action for the rest of the walking group:

Should the whole group remain until help arrives?

How many should stay behind to provide support?

If the walker is able to continue with assistance:

A volunteer should carry the walker's backpack.

Additional volunteers may be required to provide physical support.

Can the walk be shortened or is there is a suitable road closer than the end of the walk?

If taking the walker to the nearest road:

At least two volunteers are required to escort the walker.

At least one of the volunteers should be qualified in first aid, if possible.

If appropriate, at least two suitable volunteers should go ahead to drive a car to pick up the walker and escorts.

The main group should continue with the **walk leader** (or acting walk leader).

If continuing to the end of the walk:

The main group can continue ahead with the **walk leader** (or acting walk leader), but additional support walkers should remain with the walker.

When the walker has reached the end or been returned to the start of the walk, they can then be assessed again to decide if any further action is required.

In all cases, ensure that the whole walking group is informed of the course of action being taken.

Walkers

What can walkers do to mitigate such incidents:

Don't walk if you are unwell or it is too hot for you or think you might struggle on the walk.

Tell someone if you start to feel unwell or are having difficulties on a walk – they can tell the walk leader.

Don't worry about letting the group down or holding them up – there is no shame in asking for help.

Always bring sufficient water and food – as the weather gets hotter, you need to bring more water – dehydration is very dangerous.

In colder weather, ensure that you have sufficient appropriate clothing and other protection to keep dry and warm in the event of inclement weather.

Walk Safety Addendum

Purpose

The purpose of this addendum is to remind walkers of how to behave in potentially dangerous situations, as they are identified.

Walking on Roads

When walking on or beside roads is unavoidable, the general rule is to walk on the right-hand side towards potential on-coming traffic and never more than two abreast.

Always walk off the side of the road, if possible.

Remember, we may not be the only ones using the road and the other users could be in one or more motor vehicles. These other users are probably not expecting to encounter us, especially around bends in the road.

When crossing roads, always wait for the instructions of the walk leader.

Keeping the Group Together

All walkers have a responsibility to help keep the group together.

However, on some walks it is inevitable that the group will get spread out, as not all walkers walk at the same pace, especially in hilly areas or with groups of around 20 walkers.

To allow slower walkers to catch up and have a chance to recover (if necessary), always stop regularly and at track intersections, the top of hills and before crossing roads.

All walkers should endeavour to let walk leader know when they notice or are told that other walkers are falling behind.

A whip (tail walker) is nominated at the start of each walk to ensure that no walker gets left behind.

Don't get ahead of the walk leader unless agreed to with the walk leader and don't fall behind the whip.

Walk Safety Addendum 2

The above guidelines cover a number of walk safety issues, including when a walker is unable or struggling to complete a walk.

The purpose of this addendum is to clarify that if a walker decides to otherwise leave a walk, they are no longer participating in a Melton Bushwalkers Inc. activity.

In addition, all walkers participating in club walks must sign the Walk Attendance Register, acknowledging that they understand the risks and requirements of participating and take responsibility for their own actions, which include that:

- The activity is within their capabilities
- They are carrying food, water and equipment appropriate for the walk
- They have advised the walk leader of any reason that might affect their participation in the walk
- They will make every effort to remain with the rest of the party during the activity
- They will advise the walk leader of any concerns they have and accept the instructions of the walk leader
- They acknowledge that Melton Bushwalkers is a child safe organization and will abide by the club's child safe policy

Reporting an Incident

Where appropriate, the walk leader or a committee member must report a concerning incident, to be reviewed by the executive committee to determine what further action is required.

The impacted parties will receive a response from the executive committee.

A summary of the incident and action taken will be recorded in the Incident Register.

If the action taken is considered unsatisfactory, members should refer to the Grievance procedure in the model rules for incorporated associations.