



Assistant Crew Leader (ACL) Position

Volunteer Position

Last updated: 2025

Inspiring Trail Maintenance Volunteers to Create Trails for Everyone, Forever

Assistant crew leaders (ACLs) support Washington Trails Association's mission to empower hikers and everyone who loves the outdoors to explore, steward and champion trails and public lands. Every day on trail, ACLs empower volunteers to make a difference and inspire them to care for Washington's trails. Each year 4,500 WTA volunteers perform over 160,000 hours of trail maintenance across the state. They are leaders and ambassadors in a statewide community that shares values of stewardship and volunteerism; cooperation and partnership; community and inclusion; and a community that likes to have fun! Together we can ensure there are trails for everyone, forever.

Position Summary

The primary responsibility of an ACL is to assist the chief crew leader in creating a safe and rewarding experience for all participants on WTA trail work parties. They uphold our 3 trail maintenance pillars at every work party - **safety, fun and work**. ACLs pass onto new volunteers the spark and love of building, maintaining, and caring for trails; and they teach skills to empower others to make a meaningful impact on trails. They themselves have a willingness to learn and appetite to continue to build new skills. The WTA trail maintenance program wouldn't be possible without ACLs!

Key Responsibilities

While an ACL's day to day focus and objective changes with every work party, below is a summary of key responsibilities that will remain the same every day. Additionally, as an ACL, your role will have overlapping responsibilities with the crew leader. While this list is not exhaustive, this is a starting point to highlight key responsibilities.

ACL Key Responsibilities	ACL and Crew Leader (CL) Shared Responsibilities
Be aware and contribute to CL's trail work & safety plan for the day including reviewing the Emergency Action Plan.	Prep volunteers for a safe day on trail; gear checks, paperwork, tool prep etc.
Co-lead the safety (tool talk) discussion.	Welcome and get to know the volunteer green hats, especially being mindful of 1st time and/or newer volunteers.
Lead and support assigned cohort of volunteers on trail tasks. Includes ongoing assessment and providing relevant instruction as needed to ensure work is completed to standard.	Keep an eye out for everyone's safety and well being - physical and emotional. (Ex. Rocks rolling down the hill, tool use, exclusionary language).
Address concerning actions and exclusionary behaviors, and escalate to Crew Lead as necessary. Partner together on a resolution plan. Complete incident report as necessary.	Model good behaviors, work habits and safe tool use. Provides positive reinforcement and fosters a sense of accomplishment.
If Crew Lead is not available, lead Emergency Response per WTA guidelines.	Model and uphold organizational norms. Follow applicable work party policies, such as those associated with youth. Address concerning actions and interrupt exclusionary behaviors leveraging the leadership guide.
	Support emergency response leveraging WTA's Emergency Response Flowchart.



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Values: Organizational Norms

We come together to mobilize hikers and everyone who loves the outdoors to explore, steward, and champion trails and public lands. As an ACL, it is not just about delivering your responsibilities, but how you do it that matters too. WTA's organizational norms are a set of shared commitments for how we interact with each other and deliver the key responsibilities of our role. It is the shared responsibility of our staff and volunteers to uphold and model these organizational norms.

Guiding Principles	What do those principles mean?	What do they look like in practice for an ACL?
Put Relationships First	• We bring respect and care to our relationships and work. • We work to build and maintain trust with volunteers, regional teams, and support staff. • We value authenticity and are willing to be honest and vulnerable.	• Treat everyone with dignity and respect: avoid personal attacks or disparaging language. • Take time to get to know each other: there is value in time spent connecting with your crew. • Timely arrival at work parties to support the crew leader with planning and pre-work party tasks and avoid last minute cancellations whenever possible - creates trust as a leadership team.
Seek to Understand	• We know we can all learn from one another and from each conversation. • We know that intent differs from impact and we actively work to understand each other. • We work to avoid jumping to conclusions and are open to hearing new perspectives	• Value what others have to say regardless of how it is said, experience level, hard hat color. • Ask clarifying questions: if you think you might be misunderstanding something, ask!
Recognize Power Dynamics	• We seek to be aware of and acknowledge the different ways power shows up. • We practice examining systems for bias and offer solutions when it appears. • We recognize that some topics are more emotionally expensive for BIPOC and other communities and we respect their right not to educate others.	• Monitor individual participation in conversations: lean in when needed or step back to create space for others. • Think about accessibility and power before convening a space: think about ways to reduce power imbalance, particularly if you have the most power in the situation.
Be Open to Learning & Discomfort	• We seek to be open to hearing about the impact of our words/actions. • We recognize that some topics are difficult and may not lead to "closure." • We pay attention to our needs and step back when we need to.	• Invest in yourself: in order for us to bring our best selves on trail we need to take care of ourselves. • Be open to giving and receiving feedback: take feedback as an opportunity to learn.
Stay Focused on Our Common Goal	• We ground our relationships in a shared commitment to doing good work that serves our community and mission. • We allow space for messiness, creativity, fun and curiosity!	• Remember that we all care - find ways to celebrate our shared love of the outdoors. • Celebrate differences - we show our passion in different ways, there are many ways to do it!



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Experience, Skills, and Knowledge

- Demonstrate commitment to [WTA's mission](#) and values on [diversity, equity and inclusion](#).
- Demonstrated skills in foundational basics of trail maintenance and building.
- Willingness and appetite to continue to develop and grow trail maintenance and leadership skills. Including attendance at our annual Crew Leader College and/or regional technical trainings.
- Ability to accept and integrate feedback graciously and give effective feedback to volunteers, crew leaders, and WTA support staff.
- Ability to inspire other volunteers of all backgrounds by teaching skills in leadership and trail maintenance.
- Prior to ACL application, have demonstrated listed skills and experience or have comparable non-WTA experience that is applicable to the role.
- Understanding of WTA work party structure and culture (25 work parties recommended)

Training, Certification, and Role Requirements

Prior to wearing the orange hat, you must successfully complete your interview, onboarding and required trainings outlined in the ACL Pathway. Once you are in role, the following components are needed to remain an active Assistant Crew Leader. Don't forget, just because you have an orange hat, it doesn't mean you always have to wear it. You are always able to register for work parties as a green hat volunteer.

Requirements

- Signed acknowledgment of ACL position overview
- Model and uphold organizational norms
- First Aid + CPR required for standard day work parties. Participation in backcountry trips requires WFA + CPR.
 - ACLs may only register for a WFA & CPR course hosted by WTA if their current certification expires within the same calendar quarter as the training.
- Emergency response and leadership training - every 2 years
- To be an ACL at a youth work party a [WA State Background Check](#) is required.
- Support work parties by seeking to join those where additional leadership is needed
- Minimum 18 years of age or older
- If you no longer wish to remain an active ACL, email volunteer@wta.org to update your volunteer role.
- Note: If you have any changes personally that mean you will no longer be able to fulfill this role, connect directly with your regional staff team to discuss next steps and options for your role. Additionally, if you are not meeting the requirements outlined above, your regional staff team will contact you to discuss options.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge that I have read the WTA Assistant Crew Leader position overview, key responsibilities and organizational norms and will, while acting as an ACL, work to meet the expectations outlined at all times. If there is any occasion in which I need support I will let either my crew leader, regional team or WTA support staff know.

PRINTED NAME: _____

SIGNED: _____

DATE: _____