

Shasta Mountain Guides Essential Eligibility Criteria

The mission of Shasta Mountain Guides is to provide safe, fun and meaningful adventures in a wilderness setting. Our programs consist of single and multi-day wilderness climbs and ski adventures. The wilderness environments SMG travels through, as well as the activities undertaken, are remote, dynamic, challenging and committing.

The health and well being of our clients and staff are our top priority. To achieve these goals in a wilderness setting each client must be fully committed to and capable of working hard, taking responsibility for him or her self, and working effectively in a group.

SMG does not specialize in integrating people with disabilities onto courses. SMG guides are well-trained and experienced outdoor leaders and climbers, but are not specifically trained to teach or supervise people with disabilities and cannot be expected to be an advocate for a client with a disability. SMG embraces diversity and strives to create a positive environment in all of our programs. The majority of SMG clients are not seeking an integrated experience.

The Essential Eligibility Criteria are applicable for all clients. A qualified person is one who can meet the EEC for participation in the program activity. If an applicant is unable to meet certain criteria, we might be able to assist him or her with reasonable accommodation unless it alters the fundamental nature of the course; compromises the health and safety of clients or staff; or places an undue financial or administrative burden on SMG.

ESSENTIAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PARTICIPATION ON SHASTA MOUNTAIN GUIDES (SMG) PROGRAMS

Section one is the EEC for all SMG programs and offerings. Section two is the EEC for specific types of courses or activities.

1.a. Safety and Judgment

Each participant must...

- Be able to effectively warn others of potential or impending dangers such as falling rocks, aggressive animals or other environmental hazards.
- Be able to effectively signal or notify guides or other participants of personal distress, injury or need for assistance.
- Be able to do the preceding warnings and notifications up to a distance of 50 meters and in conditions with limited visibility such as in darkness or inclement weather or with loud background noise, such as high wind.

1.b. Behavior

- Work effectively as a member of a team despite potentially stressful and difficult conditions. This may require problem solving on an interpersonal or group level as well as a willingness to accept differences.
- Contribute to a safe learning environment – no harassing or abusive behavior of others for any reason.

- Be able and willingly and equally share responsibility with tent mates in daily tent group chores. Each participant may not do an equal share each day, but over a period of several days each participant should do a proportionate share. All participants are learning skills and being challenged by the conditions and activities; there can be no expectation that any other student will be able to continually assume a greater share of the work or that an instructor can continually focus a greater share of his/ her energy and time on one participant.
- Effectively communicate ideas and concerns on an individual and group level.
- Have a cognitive ability to learn necessary skills given normal time limitation of a SMG program.

1.c. Outdoor Skills: Camping

Each participant must...

- Maintain adequate hydration, nutrition and be properly dressed so as to remain generally healthy and be able to avoid environmental injuries such as hypothermia, heat illness, sunburn or frostbite.
- Be able to perform, after being instructed, the above activities independently in cooperation with other participants without direct supervision.
- Be able to move about the campsite in order to attend instructional periods, attend to toileting needs, and contribute to camping tasks as necessary.
- Live in a physically demanding, remote backcountry environment for the uninterrupted period of the program, which can range from one day to 5 days. Conditions of this environment may vary from cold (below 0 f) to hot (above 90 f) depending on location and season and may include, but is not limited to, rain, snow or hail, uninterrupted sun and /or wind, or the absence thereof. The remoteness is such that it may require a minimum of one day's travel to reach the nearest road and advanced medical care.

Section 2

The following sections describe the EEC specific to different program types or activities. All participants must satisfy the EEC listed above and the EEC below that are specific to the activity/program they are considering.

2.a. Wilderness Hiking

Each participant must....

- At minimum, be able to travel over and negotiate through varied wilderness terrain with a backpack weighing up to or exceeding 50 pounds or 40%-45% of body weight. (Most SMG programs can be done with a pack weighing 40-45 lbs, alternately on some programs a porter can be hired by the participant).
 - Travel conditions may include, but are not limited to, rough, rugged, uneven steep and sloping terrain, human made and animal made trails, rocky terrain that may range from smooth to extensive areas of large rock boulders (boulder fields), needing to cross creeks without the aid of bridges up to three feet or more in depth, ascending through thick standing and or downed vegetation and any and all travel can occur during periods of inclement weather.
 - Travel distances can range from less than one mile to more than ten miles in one day

- Travel duration can range from less than one hour to more than 12 hours in one day and occur on successive days.
- Have adequate strength and endurance and basic balance and agility to safely travel through such terrain with a backpack.
- Have the ability to have a third point of contact for balance purposes, such as with hand(s) or to hold an ice axe/ walking stick, for travel through uneven terrain, river crossings, on snow slopes or ascending or descending slopes.
- Be able to stay alert and to focus for several hours at a time while traveling.
- Although groups will often be able to take hourly breaks, occasionally this is not possible. Examples include but are not limited to: Descending/ascending a 3000' slope, descending during a thunderstorm, when in a rock-fall zone.
- Participants must be able to carry gear, food and personal items or personal medications, (such as insulin) needed for the duration of the program.

2.b. Mountaineering or Climbing programs

The requirements for Wilderness hiking courses apply to mountaineering courses with the addition of the following:

Each participant must...

- Effectively communicate in a dialogue over a distance of up to 50 meters without the assistance of another person when participating in multi-pitch rock climbing or alpine mountaineering or during glacier travel.
 - The potential necessary communication of climbing signals, may include, hand signals, spoken signals or a rope tug system. Electronic aids are likely not reliable.
 - In some circumstances the use of a companion, an interpreter or a backup belayer might be effective.
 - More notably, communication includes both:
 1. Direction from the guide as to what the participant should do, e.g. if the student falls 30 feet into a crevasse, direction regarding the procedures to be used needs to be communicated; on a multi-pitch climb if the rope becomes jammed and the instructor and student must communicate and work together to figure out what the problem is and how best to solve it.
 2. Response from the participant to the guide, e.g. if a student falls or has difficulty with a section of the climb and the instructor has to determine, by asking questions, about the student's well-being and whether rescue procedures are necessary.
- Independently provide a reliable safe belay to another climber during roped climbing. To do so a participant must be able to reliably manipulate a climbing rope through a belay device such as an ATC or Grigri.*
- Independently tie the overhand and figure of eight series of knots.*
- Independently perform a self-arrest with an ice axe if traveling on snow or glaciers.*
- Reliably and independently perform simple technical tasks such as tying into a rope, clipping into and anchor and getting into a harness without the direct supervision of an instructor. *

2.c. Ski Programs

The requirements of Wilderness hiking and Mountaineering and Climbing Programs apply to all ski programs in addition to the following

Each participant must...

- Move on skis over flat to steep (35 degree or steeper) unpacked snow-covered terrain.
- On multi-day seminars (4-5 day) be able to move a load of gear weighing up to 60 lbs or greater by means of sled, backpack or some combination thereof.
- On multi-day programs be able to travel from camp to camp, which may take all day (8 hours +).
- Be able to shovel in order to perform camp chores and to participate in rescues where people, gear or shelters have been buried in the snow such as in an avalanche or drifted in during storm.
- Be able to perceive and differentiate signals from an avalanche transceiver (transceivers are currently manufactured to transmit visual or audio signals) and efficiently move over avalanche debris without skis. *
- Be able to withstand cold (0 degrees F or colder) temperatures.

* All SMG programs incorporate instructional sessions for route and activity specific skills. All participants must prove competence in the taught skills as stated above to complete participation in the program. If the participant cannot do so the participant agrees to end their program early as determined by the guide.